

Provincetown Civil Discourse Initiative  
Final Report - Appendices  
Released June 2019

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## Appendix A. Provincetown Summary Report of Survey and Interviews

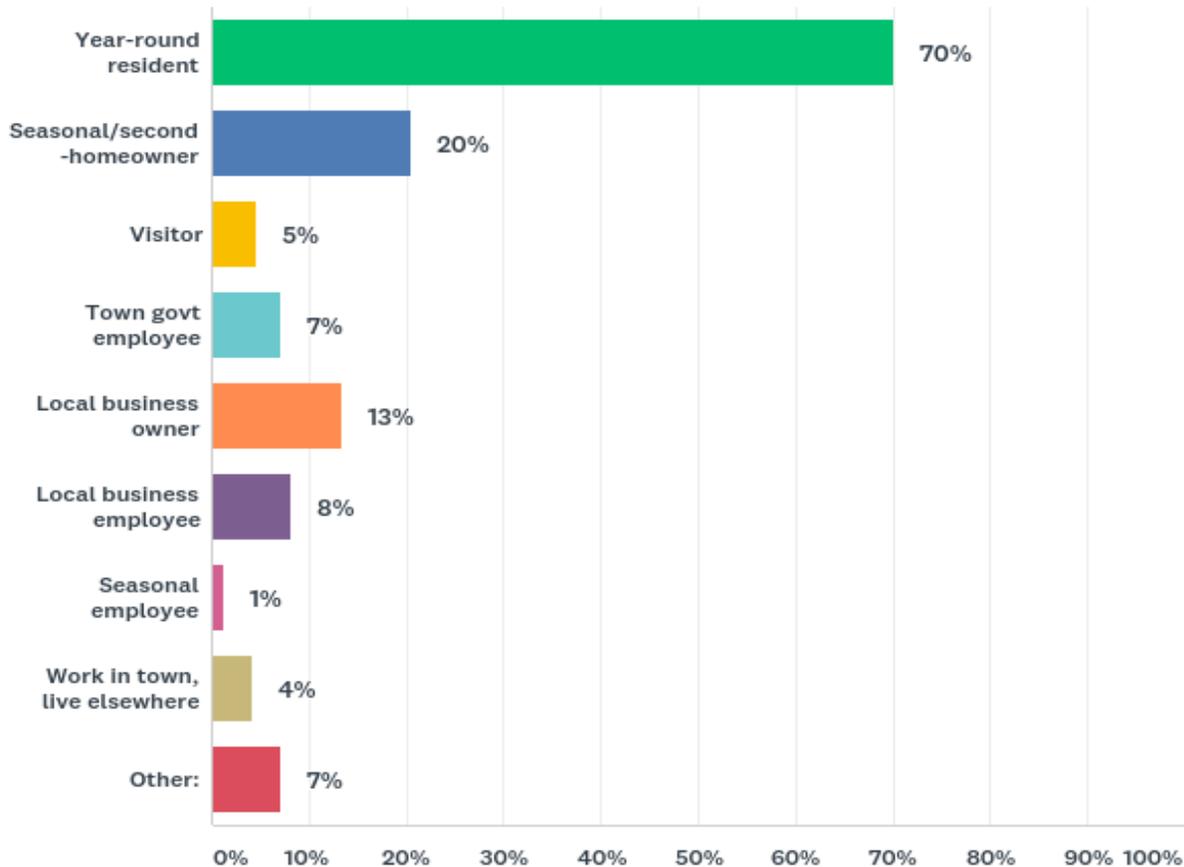
### Provincetown Civil Discourse Initiative Summary Report of Findings from Survey & Interviews Released March 2019

The Town of Provincetown asked the MA Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC) to assist the Town with exploring ways to improve and revive civil discourse in town interactions, especially online, social media interactions. Promoting civil discourse means finding ways for the community to talk with one another where all voices can be heard and decisions can be made together.

To date, the MOPC facilitation team has conducted interviews with 24 community members and disseminated a community-wide survey which received 171 responses. Below is a brief summary of what we heard.

#### Survey Results:

#### Who took the community-wide survey?



#### How many years have you been a resident (full- or part-time), visitor, or employee in Provincetown (whichever is the longest)?

<5 yrs: 12%    5-10 yrs: 17%    10-19 yrs: 25%    20+ yrs: 40%    Lifers: 6%

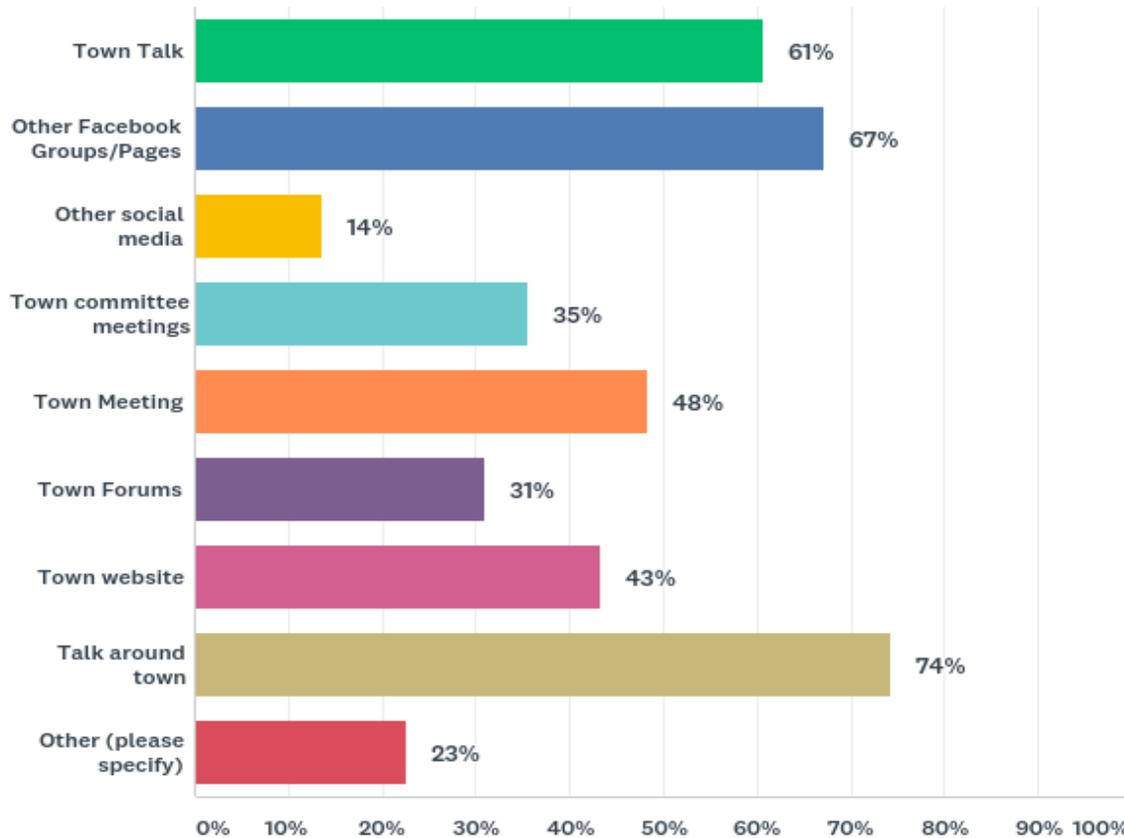
**Age Ranges:**

<25: 0%    26-45:11%    46-65: 64%    66+:25%    Prefer not to say:1%

**Gender:**

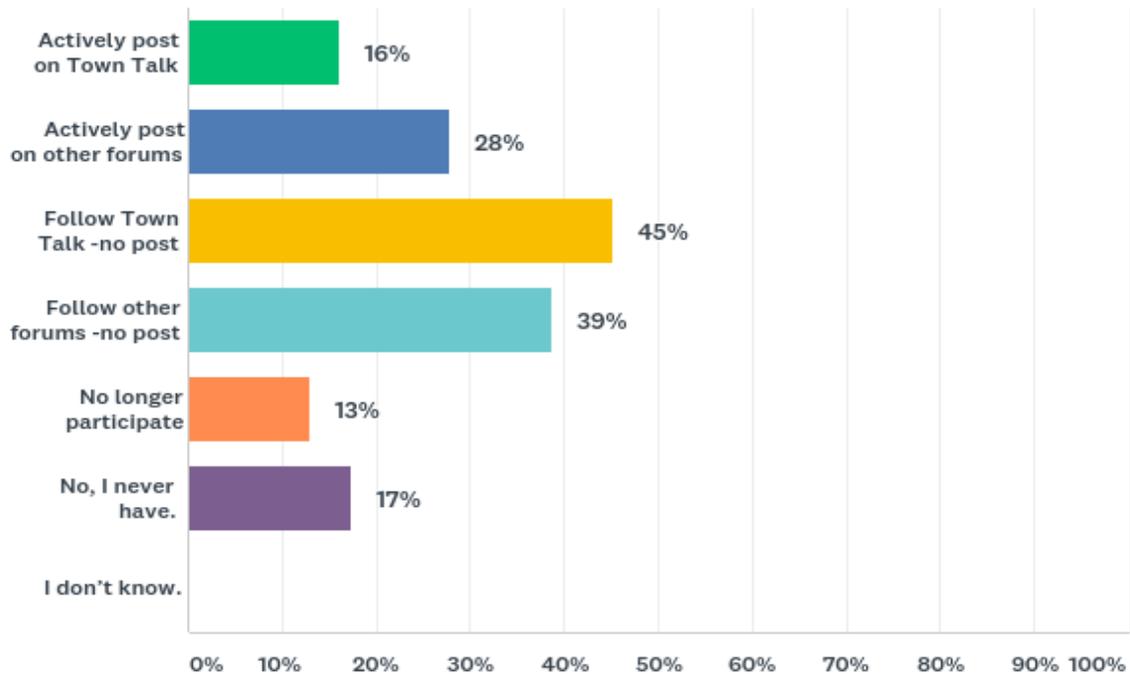
Male: 54%    Female: 43%    Non-binary: 1%    Prefer not to say: 2%

**Where do you go to learn about and discuss current town topics?**

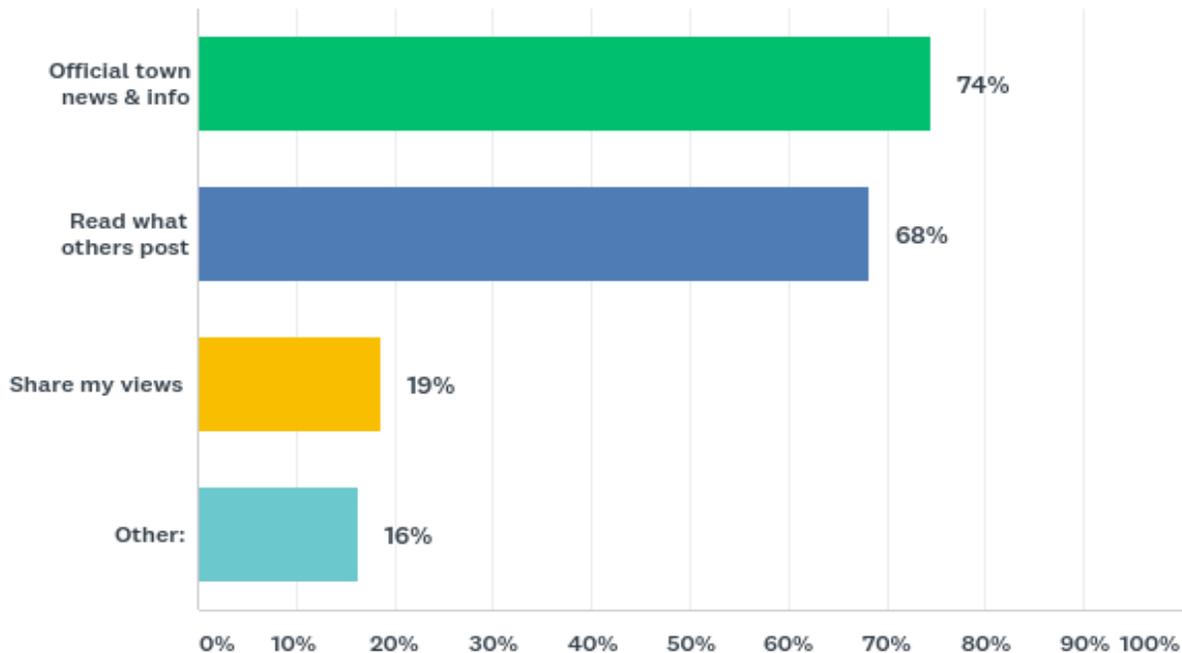


“Other” includes newspapers like the Banner, Cape Cod Times, and PTV

## Do you participate in any online forums/groups to discuss town issues?



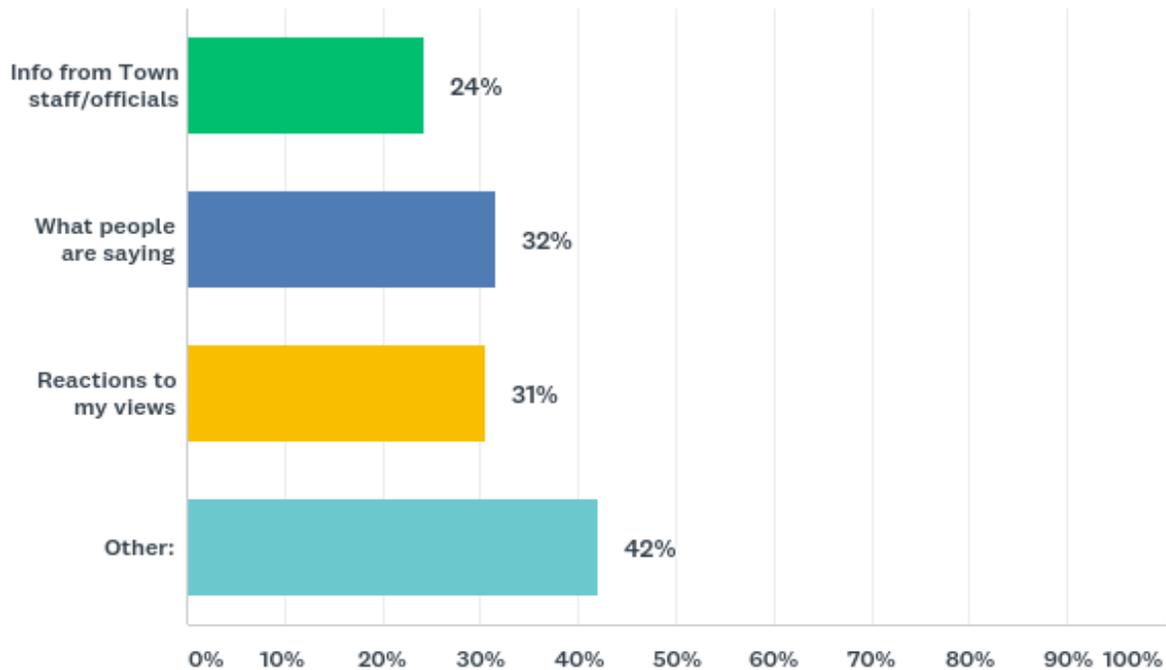
## Why do you go to Town Talk?



Under “other,” people mentioned they go to check out political gossip, for information (posting on recycling and emergencies), as part of browsing Facebook, or they avoid Town Talk altogether. Most go to get official town news and information. Not as many people share on Town Talk as much as they read what others are sharing.

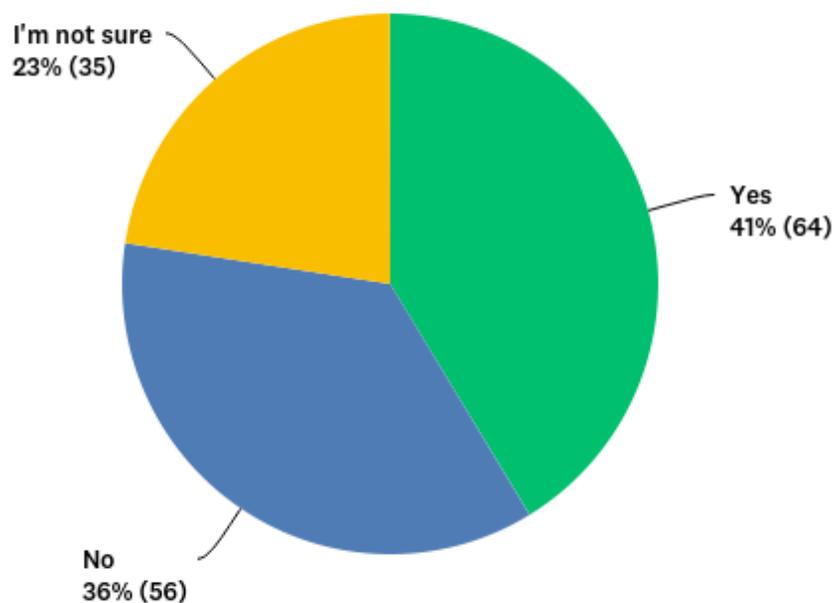
## Why do you no longer go to Town Talk or online forums?

Concerns about:



Under “other,” people mentioned belligerent members, use of personal attacks, unproductive conversations, and conversations dominated by a small group of hostile individuals.

## Do you feel you have a voice in the community?



Those who do not feel as though they have a voice mentioned that bullying has become so severe it has

kept them from speaking, second-homeowners contributions are not welcome, the select-persons and committee members are not accessible or interested in hearing people's concerns, and that unless they have money, they feel their opinions fall on deaf ears.

Those who do feel as though they have a voice said that being involved on boards or committees gives them a voice, having connections to those in charge is helpful, and they have a voice through voting.

Select Quotes:

*"While I understand that second home owners should not be eligible to vote in town elections, I do think there should be a compromise way to have our voices heard. I believe for the most part we all have Provincetown's best interests at heart."*

*"I think most people can share their opinion. That's what this town is known for. Good or bad opinions. People speak out. But, people also stop speaking -- because they know they'll get blasted for their opinions."*

*"The impression I have is that Ptown governance is very much a closed system. If you haven't been part of it for a long time, you're an outsider and your views/opinions are not welcome."*

### **What are the biggest challenges facing town related to how people talk/treat each other and make decisions together?**

The major themes that emerged from this question were: second homeowners feel unwelcome to participate, deep divisions within the town, bullying, spread of misinformation, overall lack of civility and respect, unbalanced voices in town, and distrust of Government Officials.

Select Quotes:

*"The divide between part time and full time creates an issue. We all love this place, so why should it matter."*

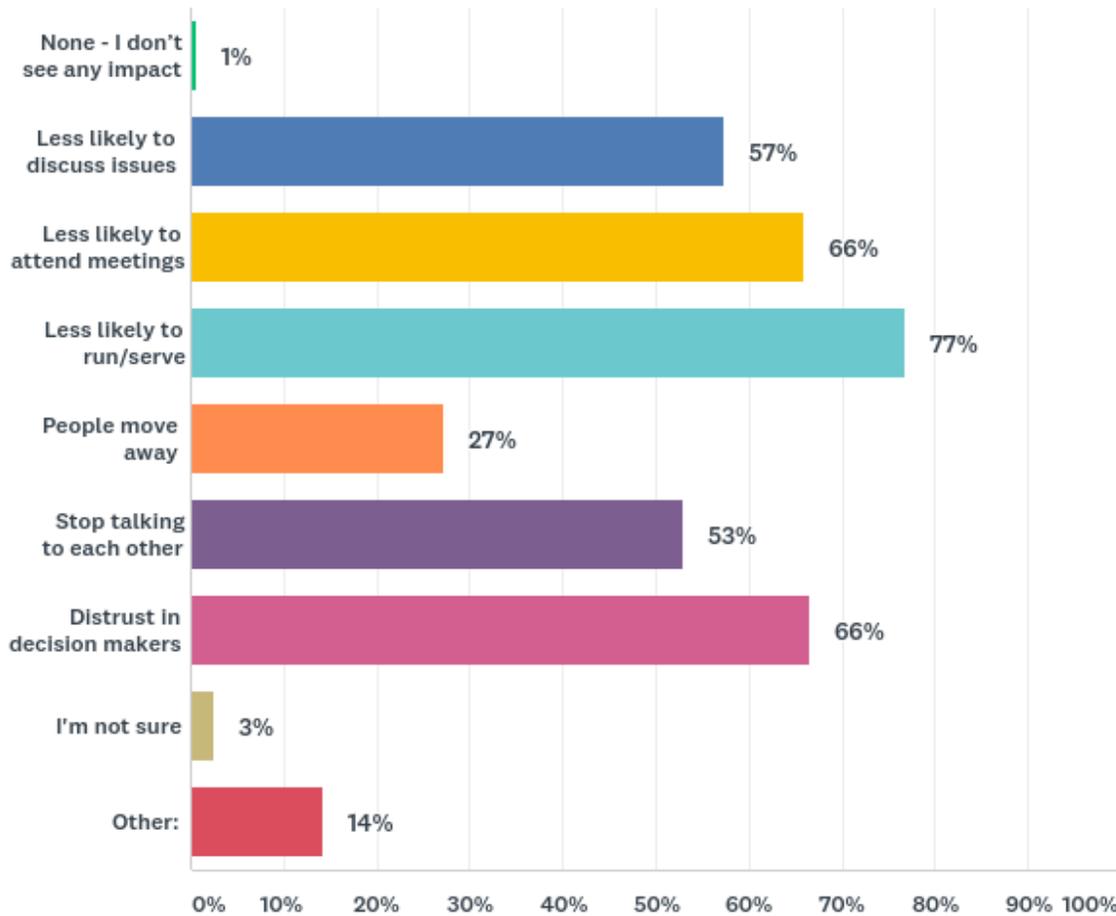
*"Bullying online leads competent people to stay quiet and not step forward to participate or serve."*

*"Town leadership has not done enough to shut down misogyny in meetings and public forums."*

*"I've seen a few males who always try to bully females when they don't like what the women are saying. I then just withdraw from the conversation."*

*"Online social commentary is nasty, personal, and oftentimes based in gossip or untruths. This makes it difficult to build consensus and accomplish positive changes in town, and it makes life here, which already has its challenges, harder."*

## What are the negative impacts of incivility (disrespectful treatment of people with differing views) in the community?



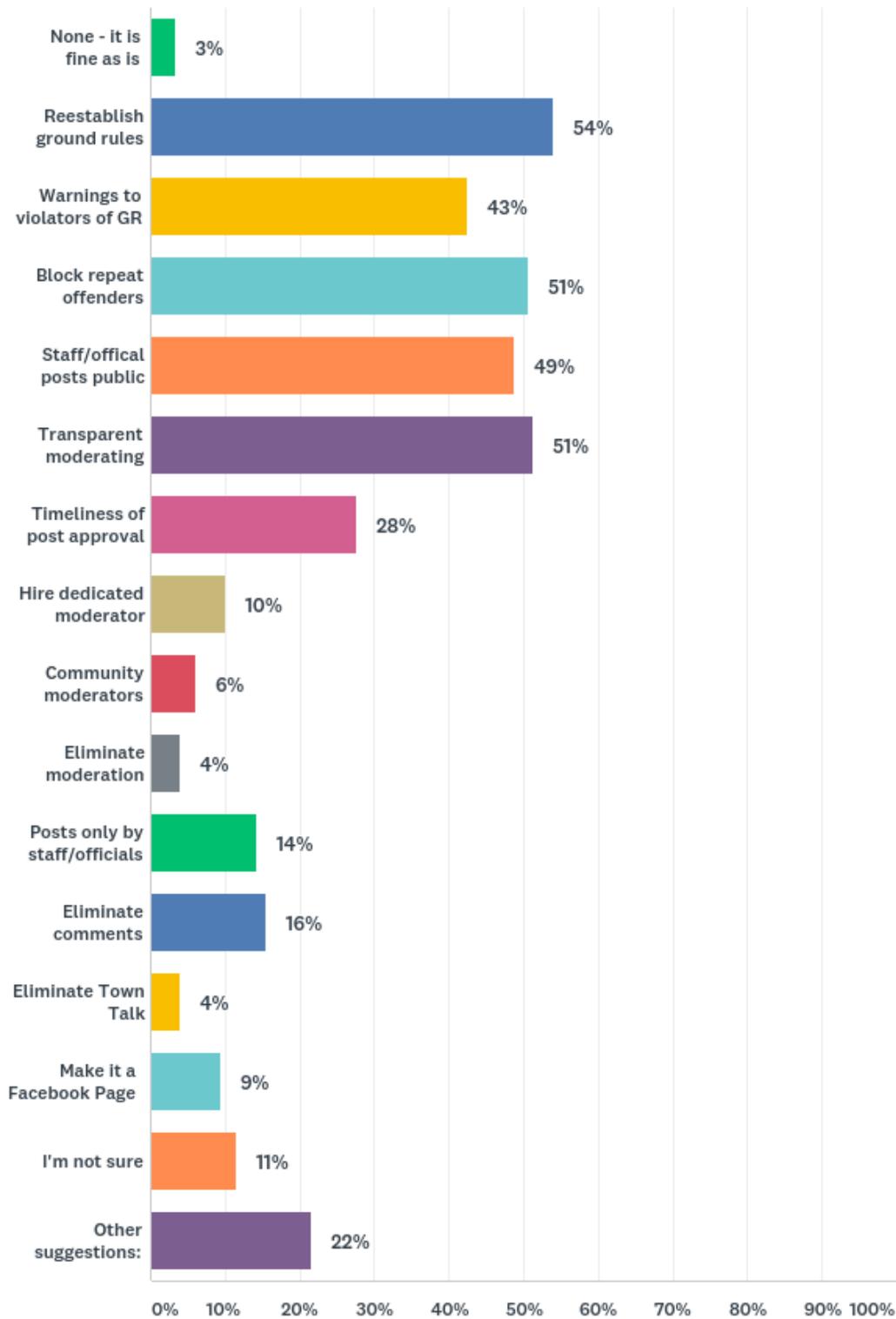
Under “other,” people replied that people are moving away, the town is deeply divided, and the overall environment is unfavorable to sharing thoughts and opinions.

### Select Quotes:

*“People are moving away. Locals are disheartened with the current state of affairs in town. The toxicity is at a heightened level.”*

*“Fear for safety both personal and business. The cruelty online also comes with stalker like research into people’s pasts.”*

**Some might suggest changes need to be made to Town Talk to improve civil discourse. Which of the below actions do you believe would be helpful?**



Under “other,” people suggested they would like to see Town Talk as a forum where only town officials post, while others want to limit public participation.

Select Quote:

*“Town talk is a great way to disperse information. I would turn off comments. If there are questions, is there a way to submit and get all answered by staff only. Leave out the public comments. I like Provincetown Wind and Sea because all meetings are posted with link to agenda and the live stream link to PTV. No other social account does that.”*

## **What role should Social Media/Town Talk play in Town decision making?**

To this open-ended question, most responses fell into one of the following categories:

No role: 11%    Minimal: 12%    Source of information: 30%    Medium for discourse: 13%  
Provide insight: 15%    Play a large role: 9%    Other: 10%

Select Quote:

*“It is an integral part of how the town communicates with people and the ability for people to discuss things. It needs to stay but needs to be moderated better so when people start to troll each other it gets taken care of quickly.”*

## **Thinking outside of online interaction, what else should be done to improve in-person civility/relationships and build community?**

Here, responses included the need to improve communication and offer more opportunities for in-person meetings, including small-group discussion sessions. Both part-time and full-time residents felt as though more support is needed in community building. Many would like to see a more unified Provincetown.

Select Quotes:

*“There needs to be more sharing of everybody’s opinion, not just registered voters. We all have a huge stake and what happens to Provincetown and we all care deeply. So it should not be one group versus another it should be all of us working together towards making everybody’s life better.”*

*“A former boss who chaired a congressional committee had an adage: ‘It’s not enough to be fair. It’s important that you appear fair.’ These folks [Town Government] could take a lesson”*

*“Most people behave better when they have face to face interaction in Town Forums, Town Meeting, Town Committees.”*

## **What would you personally be willing to do or what have you done to help improve civil discourse?**

Responses included participating in an official role, setting an example by showing kindness and respect, discouraging negativity, and providing information on divisive topics. While many people choose not to engage, others replied that they want to participate in in-person moderated forums.

Select Quotes:

*“I would like to see an arena where I was comfortable speaking out about what is going on in town, without being attacked, as I have been.”*

*“I think people just want to be heard, so the first thing to do is listen... and then respond appropriately and with correct information. Always try to set the example of what acceptable behavior can look/sound like.”*

*“Hold focus groups. let people share their opinions IN PERSON -- NOT online. create a plan from these meetings. doing this survey is a good first start. .. create a vision statement around Civility for the Town. Create a Plan. State a goal that Provincetown become ONE OF THE HAPPIEST AND NICEST TOWNS TO LIVE IN AND WORK IN. (not just visit) -- and, then create a roadmap on how to get there. Do anti-bullying sessions. Employ the services of a group to train and coach people How to Disagree Constructively”*

## **Interview Responses:**

Below is a brief summary of some of the topics which emerged from the 24 interviews. Interviewees included town officials, year-round and seasonal residents, lifetime residents and newcomers, business owners, and employees.

### **Town Talk and Social Media**

Interviewees described a challenging environment on community social media channels. Not all felt that this was an issue, however. People discussed the environment on Town Talk as being problematic, although some noted it has improved of late. It was also noted that some of the other community Facebook groups also experience the same kind of divisiveness.

Use of Town Talk: Overall, interviewees described Town Talk as a vast and appreciated source of information for residents and the community. It provides news, updates, and also insight into current feelings and opinions of some community members. Generally, Town Talk is not considered an effective medium for dialogue, as many people keep opinions to themselves out of fear of bullying or retaliation. Thus, it does not give a full picture of where the community stands on a certain matter and it is also not effective at gauging the amount of support/opposition a matter will have when it goes to vote. People also raised concerns about what community members share on Town Talk. Many rarely question what people post, and this can lead to rumors, conjecture, and the spread of misinformation.

Some interviewees expressed concern with how engaged people seem on social media, yet many are absent from participating on boards/committees, attending meetings, or voting. There was also concern expressed about access to news and information for those who do not use social media.

Select Quotes:

*“ It [Social Media] became a method and tool of saying what’s on your mind and not really caring.”*

*“If you don’t share facts and information with them, they will make their own stories about it.”*

Desire for Moderators Online: Overall, interviewees expressed a need for improving the moderation of Town Talk. There is currently unevenness in the timeliness of posts, people are not always given reasons for why something is denied, and people are not really sure who does the moderating or what criteria are used. On the other hand, concerns were also raised by some that increased moderation is a form of censorship. Some interviewees suggested adding additional moderators to Town Talk to help with timeliness and to keep discourse in check and mitigate conflict. However, there was some uncertainty about who could fill this role, be considered neutral, as well as have the ability to put in the time needed. The idea of community-run moderation was raised. Several people also said it was time to turn off comments altogether, or that commentary for some posts should be turned off.

### **Town Governance**

Some interviewees viewed town boards and committees as dysfunctional and unable to collaborate, both among their members and in their interactions with residents. The same people often serve on multiple

boards/committees and have often served for a long time. New people are hesitant to volunteer or run for election because of bullying online, particularly in light of the hostility in recent elections. Also, people noted an issue with lack of attendance and participation in official meetings and voting. These all result in a small group of residents often making decisions for the whole town. It was also noted that serving on a board or committee is often thankless, with members being criticized or harassed, both in person and online.

It also came to light that particular groups of the community are not interested in participating at all, some are interested but unsure of how to participate, while many second homeowners want to participate but have few options given their non-resident status.

Regarding information dissemination and preparation for meetings, some noted that the information packets for town meetings are not provided in a way that can be easily read and digested by most people.

Select Quotes:

*“People show up to Town Meeting and don’t understand the articles, because written by lawyers”*

*“If I was running for public office, would be scared to do it because of Facebook.”*

*“Who does the Selectboard answer to? There is no recourse – that’s a problem. If not follow code of ethics – no consequences. We can vote different people in, but if no one wants to run for election...”*

*“80% of Ptown are second homeowners. The local board could allow second homeowners to sit on boards – perhaps not as permanent members – but at least allow them to speak at Town Meeting.”*

## **Divisiveness**

Numerous examples of divisiveness emerged from the interviews that people felt fuel incivility and a lack of community cohesion.

Interviewees mentioned that some people are afraid to express views due to fear of bullying and how it may impact their businesses or jobs. Others described the negative impact vulgar language and name calling have on them and others. Examples were shared of gender specific expletives directed primarily at women. Some women interviewed feel there is a misogynistic climate in town, and a couple of men mentioned feeling their gender has been used against them.

Those newer to Provincetown feel as though they are not welcomed by long-time residents. In addition, some noted that immigrants are not viewed as welcome despite the community’s reliance on them for seasonal labor. Others identified rifts between the “haves” and “have nots”, residents and second homeowners, the LGBTQ and straight community, and between men and women, among others.

The reality of the resort-town environment in Provincetown is that many who come to town are vacationers visiting only for a short time. This means many residents do not have a sense of who their neighbors are anymore. Additionally, using the Internet as a staple of communication enables an increased emotional distance between residents.

However, people also noted times where the community rallied together, especially when there was a cause to support. There is a desire and need for more opportunities to bring the community together.

Select Quotes:

*“You can be civil and disagree, but it doesn’t seem like people do it.”*

*“Everyone’s voice is important and equally important.”*

*“People have built identity on being cynical or suspicious, so it’s hard to dialogue with them.”*

*“If you think it [views] might hurt your business, you shut up”*

*“Straight people can travel and go anywhere and everywhere. Gay people need to feel they are welcome and safe”*

**Next Step: Community Dialogues**

The input gathered in the survey and interviews will provide a basis for community dialogues the week of April 24-30, 2019. Members of the Provincetown community are invited to come together and discuss how to build a more inclusive and engaged community. The schedule is included below.

<b>Wed 4/24</b>	<b>Thurs 4/25</b>	<b>Fri 4/26</b>	<b>Sat 4/27</b>	<b>Sun 4/28</b>	<b>Mon 4/29</b>	<b>Tues 4/30</b>
		10:30-12:30pm The Commons	10am-12pm Library			
	1-3pm Library	2:30-4:30pm The Commons	2-4pm Library	2-4pm Library	2-4pm Council on Aging	1-3pm Library
6-8pm Town Hall	5:45-7:45pm Library				6-8pm Town Hall	

## Appendix B. Dialogue Issue Guide

### What Should be Done to Create a More Inclusive & Engaged Provincetown?

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Provincetown has long been known as a place of inclusivity, where people felt safe to be themselves and voice their opinions. The beautiful surroundings and the town's zest for life have attracted scores of visitors, some who have made it their second home. Over the years, Provincetown has evolved over time and with a growing seasonal community, many people don't know their neighbors like they used to. Like elsewhere in the nation, people in Provincetown do a great deal of socializing and interacting via social media. Some people are much bolder online, and personal attacks, bullying and name calling seem to be par for the course.

People are less involved in town affairs and decision making, with the same community members often serving on boards and committees, and few people showing up to meetings where issues are discussed and decisions are made. Facts and information are sometimes drowned out by conjecture and gossip. The changes in the makeup of the community has also fostered an "us vs them" dynamic across several groups, leading to a decreased sense of community overall. Many people are discouraged, dis-engaged, and some have gone so far as to move. Without addressing these issues, people will continue to disconnect, may feel unsafe and/or unwelcome, or may choose to move or not buy property.

What should be done?

Some people want to clamp down on the uncivil behavior, while others see it as a step towards infringement of free speech. Or, is it a question of just growing thicker skin, as has been suggested?

Some people want to see broader participation, while others only want resident participation. Coupled with a concern about bullying and impacts on businesses, what are ways to increase engagement in town decision making?

Some people want to see more community building events to bring people together in person, while others feel you can't force inclusivity. What should be done to address the "us vs them" dynamic?

These community dialogues are a way to gain better understanding of people's concerns and interests, hear where people stand on the tensions and trade-offs related to communication and public engagement in the community, and allow people to hear from each other. Today's dialogue is part of a series intended to help the community to explore these issues, hear from each other, and move toward action collectively.

This guide offers three approaches to help launch this conversation. While not mutually exclusive, each approach reflects different perspectives and priorities that provide a different lens in which to view the nature of the problem and the kinds of actions that might be taken. Additional approaches may surface during the dialogue. No approach is without drawbacks, which also need to be examined in order to decide how to proceed.

This discussion guide was developed by the MA Office of Public Collaboration through its Public Deliberation Program. The Issue Guide is based on community interviews and survey data.

## Approach 1: Create a Civil Space Online to Share Information and Exchange Ideas

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Town Talk is noted as a key source of official information and also a place to share thoughts and solutions. At the same time, people have identified concerns about Town Talk and the social media environment overall. Personal attacks and bullying are frequent in online communications, which has led some people to stop participating altogether. The business community often stays quiet, afraid of how their contributions might impact their business. Information shared by community members is not always accurate, and with few means of fact checking user contributions, misinformation can spread easily. However, few people would like to see it taken down entirely. What should be done to keep Town Talk operating in a useful way?

Actions may include:

- Develop ground rules for participation on Town Talk, outlining expectations of how participants should engage with one another, and consequences of violating ground rules.
- Support Town staff enforcement of town social media policies.
- Increase transparency of Town Talk as the official town FB group - e.g. Town staff and official posts must be public and viewable by all, and moderators must be transparent about why a post/comment violates town social media policies and expectations for approving posts.
- Optimize Town Talk moderator role - e.g. hire a staff moderator, identify community moderators
- Have participants flag inappropriate posts/comments on Town Talk and other social media sites.
- Agree that if voicing concerns online, people must also provide ideas for solutions or suggest actions to finding solutions.
- Agree to make Town Talk a space for respectful disagreement and conversation over vitriol, personal campaigns and attention seeking behaviors.

Benefits:

- Sets clear expectations for participation and moderation.
- More efficient and transparent moderation builds trust.
- Improves timing and clarifies process between submitting posts and approval.
- Everyone has access to official information if blocking is not allowed by town staff officials.
- Shared responsibility - everyone has a role to play in creating a good online environment.

Drawbacks:

- Increased moderation will likely require additional resources (time and money).
- Following ground rules and calling out bad behavior are hard to implement as they require ongoing individual commitment.
- Calling out bad online behavior may result in becoming a target of personal attacks/bullying.
- Dealing with bad behaviors on Town Talk only, will likely not end hostility as people may simply go to other forums where guidelines may not exist.

Trade-offs:

- If guidelines and moderation are increased to enforce civility, it may infringe on free speech.
- If moderation is increased, additional dedicated town staff hours or community volunteer moderators are required.

## Approach 2: Increase Participation in Town Affairs & Decision-Making

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People have identified that broad participation in town governance is currently lacking. Some people voice their opinions online, but don't attend meetings or vote. Others feel as though they don't have a voice, such as second homeowners who have limited opportunities to participate. Some people are nervous about serving on boards and committees or voting, fearing public scrutiny. Many town committee members and officials have sat on committees and boards for multiple terms, either because no one else has volunteered to serve or run against them in elections. There is some distrust in town officials. Some people also think information on town matters is hard to find or digest. What should be done to increase participation in town affairs and decision-making?

Actions may include:

- Find ways for community-minded second homeowners to be involved.
- Improve notices of meetings - including online, mail, bulletin boards.
- Improve access to information and recordings - make it easier to find and digest.
- Explore alternative voting methods to increase participation and reduce fear of retaliation/ridicule.
- Agree that voicing opinions online is not a replacement for attending and/or voicing concerns at meetings.
- Agree that when voicing concerns, one must also suggest potential solutions or ways to find solutions.
- Enhance skills in leadership, public engagement, collaborative decision-making, and communications for town staff, officials, committee members, etc.

Benefits:

- People are better informed about town affairs.
- People are more likely to vote if they have good information and/or don't fear retaliation or ridicule.
- Quality decision-making can be made with broader participation from the community, more informed voting, and skillful town leadership.
- Second homeowners have ways to contribute and support the community beyond paying taxes.

Drawbacks:

- Preparing additional user-friendly public information takes more time from staff and/or others.
- Additional informational meetings require time and resources from staff and/or others.
- Alternative voting methods may be expensive.
- Giving (more) voice to second homeowners means they can influence decisions that impact year-round residents.

Trade-offs:

- If barriers to information and voting are reduced, then people need to take responsibility for reviewing information, attending, and participating.
- If people become more informed and participatory, then elected and public officials need to be willing to share some of their power.

## Approach 3: Foster Community Connection to Reduce Divisiveness

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People have identified a strong “us vs them” dynamic across different groups, including “haves” and “have nots”, men and women, residents and second homeowners, LGBTQ and straight, lifelong residents and “wash-ashores”, and between those of different races and ethnicities. There is also a feeling that the community has changed greatly - many residents don’t know their neighbors like they used to. Additionally, the seasonal dynamics of Provincetown heightens the disconnect - some people leave for the winter, and many are busy making a living in the summer. People want more connection and a stronger sense of community, which will take some pointed efforts. What should be done to bridge the “us vs them” dynamic?

Actions may include:

- Consider eliminating Town Talk or make it a bulletin board from Town Staff without comments to reduce online hostility and its impact on divisiveness.
- Create face to face community-building opportunities - e.g., community conversations, volunteering on projects, social gatherings.
- Focus on events that celebrate Provincetown as a whole (vs individual group events)
- Create more informal opportunities to get to know staff, officials, and committee members and to partner and collaborate on public initiatives.
- Identify a vision and commit to long-term goals to further Provincetown’s potential as an inclusive community.

Benefits:

- Town Talk becomes a source of official information without the noise and hurtful comments.
- More face-to-face and social interactions build connections and allow for conversation.
- More people share the burden of civic responsibility and take action collectively.
- A connected community is more welcoming and creates a sense of belonging.
- Town government and community members work together to make things happen.

Drawbacks:

- The seasonal nature of town makes it hard to hold events when everyone can attend, and some people think there are enough events as is.
- If Town Talk is eliminated, people will lose easy access to official information and discussions.
- Without comments on Town Talk, there is less opportunity for feedback or to gauge reactions.
- Not all community members may be willing to assume good intentions and ask questions instead of dismissing or dissing others.
- People who reach out to those who previously bullied them or with whom they had a difference of opinion may be met with further harassment.

Trade-offs:

- If more community building opportunities are offered, then people must commit to attend and participate.
- If divisiveness is to be addressed, people must look outside of the groups they identify with and consider the collective interests of the Provincetown community.

## Appendix C. Themed Responses from Initial Community Survey

Below are themed responses from the initial community survey. Although the Provincetown Summary Report of Survey Results and Interviews (see Appendix A) speaks to the themed findings, we believe it is important to provide a nearly full account of the responses people provided, both out of respect for those who took the time to participate and so that people can benefit from the richness of people's feedback. Please note that we have redacted some responses (shown as \*redacted\*) in order to provide some protection to people not in official positions. We hope you find it as useful as we have.

### Q6a: (If applicable) Why do you go to Town Talk?

#### Themed Responses:

##### *Political Gossip:*

- To listen to town official wag the dog. Gotta know what you're up against when searching for the truth, it's usually done where in between. Forget the banner rag mag
- To see what disaster it is. There are posts (NOT comments-- POSTS) allowed there by that are savage personal attacks on individuals. My taxes are paying for this garbage. Cancel it NOW! Also, to see which side of his mouth Panagore is speaking out of today. Decent guy, OK administrator of staff, terrible at Facebook, feckless.
- I just learned of it and have found the town manager to censor the page and keep people he doesn't agree with quiet and banned
- To learn what inappropriate behavior Mark Hatch has engaged in.

##### *Information:*

- To post on behalf of the Recycling and Renewable Energy Committee - I am a member and the admin for the RREC FB page
- Emergency Information

##### *Other:*

- Just browse on Facebook
- The town has censored too many people including me. The public with an interest in state resources managed by the town has been blocked
- I was banned from this site because I challenged misogynistic commentary
- I don't actively post in online forums - it's risky as a business owner. but I do speak out if i see someone or someone's business being disparaged. this happens often on the general provincetown online spaces.
- I comment in Provincetown Voice occasionally. I avoid Provincetown Community Space. I also follow and occasionally post in the Ptown Photography and Ptown Gardens groups

### Q6b: (If applicable) Why do you no longer go to Town Talk or online forums?

#### Themed Responses:

##### *Unpleasant User Contribution:*

- It's a sad passive / aggressive landscape. Nothing valuable that can't be done in real time
- It became too frustrating to read comments from people who were uninformed.
- Tired of people getting personal in their attacks
- I still go to Town Talk, but the conversation has been severely stifled by belligerent members constantly attacking elected and appointed officials combined with what I can only assume is a "fear" on the part of officials to post anything and risk being attacked or accused of any number of baseless things!
- I still go, but much less often because I don't feel the discussions are productive in many cases
- I read Town Talk and comment and post, but I am also concerned about how people comment.

- It's dominated by very few angry people who poison everything. Why is that allowed? Come up with rules and follow them or dump it. Town talk is a waste (so is the money being blown on this btw lol)
- I have concerns about how people react to their own rhetoric
- I don't have concerns about content. Only w/people who bomb the page
- I just don't like all the mean comments
- On those occasions when I view other forums I'm put off by personal attacks
- I rarely go because it can be so dang hostile.
- People don't get the correct information and make up things that get spread around causing bad blood
- People are just horrible to one another online.
- Not Interested in gossip.

Other:

- Banned from Town Talk by Town Manager
- The same people go on and on
- I was banned
- truthfully, I've become less concerned with Provincetown politics.
- I was removed without a reason provided.
- There is little significant information or news. It is sterile and too highly administered. People are blocked and the administrator is biased.

**Q7: Do you feel you have a voice in the community? Please explain your answer.**

Themed Responses:

*No, we do not have a voice:*

*Non-Full time residents are voiceless:*

- Town only cares about the opinions of year rounders
- As a part-time resident, I've occasionally spoken at Select Board and other Board meetings but generally feel like I'm ignored.
- Seasonal residents are second class citizens
- Don't vote here, have no voice. Belong to Part-Time Residents group, which is terrific, but in the end, decisions are made by a quorum of registered voters at Town Meeting. Everyone else has no voice.
- As a part time resident we have very little say in any decisions of the town. I'm so tired of being referred to as "Privileged ". I have worked for every penny I have. It's very frustrating.
- Not really. I am a resident during summers, but don't feel that my views are of much interest to full-time residents. The general hostility toward part-time residents is intimidating.
- As a second home owner, I feel that some in the town actively seek to create an "us-vs-them" dynamic. This is demonstrated with the split-tax rate, where I as a second home owner have a higher tax rate and am not allowed to have a voice in town governance.
- Pay taxes but cannot vote
- They favor full time residents
- As a part-time resident taxpayer, I feel local government and many voters have actively marginalized people like me.
- I am a second homeowner, so I believe my voice is systematically discounted
- Non resident owner
- Second homeowners have no say, voice or vote at town meeting
- I live in [outside Provincetown] but work in Provincetown and our views are not considered valuable

- while I understand that second home owners should not be eligible to vote in town elections, I do think there should be a compromise way to have our voices heard. I believe for the most part we all have Provincetown's best interests at heart. While I know that is not the topic of this survey, it may explain why some people are so outspoken on social media: it is there only tool to be heard.
- As a "part-time" seasonal homeowner, it's my understanding we have no vote.
- Part-time residents have no voice in this town.

#### *Distrust of Officials*

- No one really cares. It's all politics
- I don't know if policymakers listen.
- Town officials are following their own agendas and are NOT LISTENING to the year round residents, nor do they care about their needs and wants. The Town has an agenda which is not in the best interest of those who reside here.
- I'm not rich. This a town of rich people now. Without the power money brings I fear the cops too much to raise my voice about anything.
- Town officials love to wag the dog. Not transparent enough. Town website is in the dark ages.
- Long time distrust of The Town of Provincetown
- I've been a part-time resident for a number of years and only recently became a full-time resident. The impression I have is that Ptown governance is very much a closed system. If you haven't been part of it for a long time, you're an outsider and your views/opinions are not welcome.
- I'm not sure whom to address issues to. Town employees seem helpful but don't seem to make policy. I have no connection to the select-persons, committees, meetings, hearings, etc. They seem so official, not accessible, unavailable, unwelcoming.
- Officials of Provincetown (paid and volunteers), all members of the oligarchy, blocked, several times, the public voice (the petition) that speaks to the public's present day interest for what the public wants. The blocking was followed by more questionable moves. The AGs office is encouraging the filing of a complaint.

#### *Bullying / Opinion not welcome*

- too much rancor in response
- Bullies drone on and all voices are not welcome.
- I don't comment online at all because of the horrible behavior and nastiness of some of the people.
- Input and feedback is not welcome, town staff are burnt out, hostile non responsive
- Over run by negative commenters.
- I definitely let my opinions and ideas be known, however they will often be drowned out by a small handful of trolls who constantly contribute nothing to the conversation except complaints, accusations and misinformation.

#### *Other:*

- My vote does not always count
- I am in the minority on most issues.
- I found it to be " playtime " for many and the censorship was sad to see occuring
- Developers are favored because they generate tax revenue
- I am neither rich or gay

Yes, we do have a voice:

*Politically involved:*

- I'm a member of FinCom, so I'm very engaged with what's going on in Town. Plus, I vote...
- As a member of several Town committees.
- I vote regularly.
- I participate in boards & committees and have been twice elected; I have a high-profile position, contact TM & other town employees when necessary; some of my friends are local- & state-elected; in other words, I engage myself in the community.
- I've learned how to work with town officials and staff and do my homework before chiming in on issues.
- By protesting, going to Town Meeting, and sharing my thoughts with my friends.
- Involved in town
- Lived here a long time. served on boards and committees
- I can be heard at Town Meeting if I choose to. I can write a letter to the Banner (and I have). I can talk to David Panagore any time I want.
- I vote
- I put myself out to be informed about the town and its challenges and its successes. I work hard at it. Have served on boards and committees and have been elected.
- I am on several committees and a Board.
- I serve (and have served) for many years on volunteer boards

*Other:*

- I do. with that said - I think most people can share their opinion. that's what this town is known for. Good or bad opinions. people speak out. But, people also stop speaking -- because they know they'll get blasted for their opinions.
- I speak up. Regularly. Carefully. Focusing on facts, without making accusations, but defending myself quickly when challenged - with MORE facts. The result is that an increasing number of people, even people who say they usually disagree with me, say that they like my posts and in real life, ask me "what's going on with..." regularly.
- I comment when I feel appropriate
- Just not online
- I know I am listened to by some
- Through voting and personal discussion - a small voice
- Yes because I have lived here a long time and I know quite a few people
- through interactions with others in town.
- I post when I have questions and usually get answers

**Q8: What are the biggest challenges facing Provincetown related to how people talk/treat each other and make decisions together?**

Themed Responses:

*Second Homeowners Unwelcome:*

- Year rounders treating second homes owners, visitors as nuisances
- The lack of input and participation allowed to 2nd homeowners.
- I feel the Town is divided Residents vs. Non residents. The non residents keeping the Town alive without having a voice
- Year rounders seem to believe that because they're here all year they deserve more. As a part time resident I have done so much to beautify my home which helped builders, landscapers, plumbers, electricians, etc. I also spend a ton of money in town and bring friends in that spend money.
- It favors full time residents even though part timers support the town. No collaboration

- Social and political ideologies keep 2nd homeowners from communicating with residents, gay vs straight still has lots of barriers particularly with summer renters, etc.
- Second homeowners have not vote, so they are repeatedly and rudely discounted (if I had a dime for every time someone said "If you don't like it, move," or " Second homeowners are wealthy so put up and shut up....")
- Their resentment of people who do not live in town year round

#### *Divisiveness:*

- Haves vs. Have Nots
- Too much talk about inclusiveness and cohesion, but not nearly as much action
- The vocal few seem to be vigilant and band together to attack people and opinions different from theirs. IE tiny houses last year
- Far too much divisiveness based on labeling "the other".
- Distrust between full- and part-time residents. Some online bullying makes participating in discussions risky.
- People from outside of the community 'stirring the pot'
- Spending of town money. Half of town residents want to spend and keep trying ways to tax more and other half tired of paying for everything
- Many town officials and some voters promote a "We/They" dynamic with respect to part-time residents. These same voices also denigrate their neighbors who disagree with them. It is sad to see. I know many "full time" residents who feel the same but are too afraid to speak up.
- Human nature (tribalism) prevailing among people of widely varying priorities, income/class, life situations, professions, backgrounds. "class warfare".
- Spending of town money. Half of town residents want to spend and keep trying ways to tax more and other half tired of paying for everything
- Negativity. Us vs them.
- High level of division. Many not open to other ideas but their own.
- The divide between part time and full time creates an issue. We all love this place, so why should it matter. There also seems to be a divide an economic divide- those who can afford to live here and those who can't.
- Divisiveness of social media
- Something, social media or perhaps greater socio-economic forces, has created tribes of us versus them to the point where the greater "community" has suffered.
- Washashore vs. longer-term resident discord. Doer vs Talker discord. Economic status discord
- Us vs them
- Division on identity of town and who gets heard.

#### *Bullying:*

- It feels unsafe to share opinions online. People are attacked for their ideas, their questions, their observations, how long they have been here, everything. It turns personal almost immediately. It also seems to take forever to get to an action item.
- Misogyny Toxic male rage Town manager
- There are bullies who run the town for personal gain.
- National politics flowing down to the local level. Natural tensions exist between various groups here, but the above only exacerbates this
- Ad hominem attacks
- Sexual bias, anti woman, sexual harassment and public shaming of women
- Enough people are bullies that others feel it's okay to engage bad behavior or feel cowed or feel discussions is futile.
- Nastiness online. Name calling and disrespect. A few men are particularly awful [...]. I stopped even reading that page let alone commenting. They are vipers.
- Bullying online leads competent people to stay quiet and not step forward to participate or serve. There are several large personalities who are wealthy male business owners and town

board members who are threatening presences online and in town meeting. Town leadership has not done enough to shut down misogyny in meetings and public forums.

- A few folks attack and bully others on social media.
- I'm sure it's not the only thing, but I've seen a few males who always try to bully females when they don't like what the women are saying. I then just withdraw from the conversation.
- The comments on Provincetown Community Space are often personal, mean-spirited attacks on one another.
- Some people thinks it's fun to engage in backbiting, tearing people down--even to their faces, undermining others who are working on rather than just talking about projects, entertaining themselves by striving to be sarcastic witty and seen as a leader when, actually, they don't. Some people enjoy being contrary, being polarizing and seen as the renegade rather than working toward consensus. Maybe that's it: training people to strive for consensus.

#### *Misinformation:*

- People are lazy and don't bother to look up information that is readily available online - they expect others to answer their questions right away without doing any research themselves
- It seems to me that the loudest voices get the most attention, regardless of how ill-informed, short-sighted, or self-serving they may be. They are often aided and abetted by those who use Robert's Rules to prevent others from gaining a better understanding of complex issues.
- Overreaction and polarizing of opinions in place of conversation and consensus building. Lack of education on issues and process
- People post on how they feel without really doing any research on an issue.
- getting ALL the facts on the table. mostly, the info presented is biased in one direction or another depending on who is presenting it. it's the nature of the beast. the town used to have 2 active newspapers. we have one now, and they don't have enough reporters to cover the local issues as they once did.
- Unnecessary rudeness; not having the facts before speaking; not listening; making assumptions
- Lack of Informed discourse/fair debate Lack of manners Lack of critical thinking
- individuals deciding what the towns most pressing problem, laying out the solution and then getting angry when it isn't done or done the way they say it should be. Hi jacks the conversation online and uses town resources(employees) time. It must be very frustrating for employees. This includes the select board for example. No basic knowledge of how town operates etc but quite convinced otherwise. The ZBA seems to know its stuff or used to.

#### *Lack of Respect / Civility:*

- Lack of Consideration
- Lack of respect [mentioned multiple times]
- Lack of civility [mentioned multiple times]
- People need to be CIVIL, always - regardless of the subject or opinions that may conflict with yours. If you cannot comment in a CIVIL and RESPECTFUL manner, you should not be allowed to post at all. This is not "free speech" issue, belligerent behavior would NOT be tolerated at Town Meeting and should never be tolerated on social media. I often hear the justification that an individual is "passionate in their views", that is NOT an excuse for uncivil behavior - it makes no difference how "passionately" you feel about any given subject.
- Civility. People should be able to post opinions without being attacked
- I don't know how you teach people to have manners. What frustrates me is people only bitch about the problems, they never offer a solution. For example. A guy complained about the blacktop washing into the ocean at Herring Cove. He could have voiced his concern and then asked people to show up at a date and time to pick it up. But no he just wanted to complain.
- Before local political FB pages, there wasn't the toxicity and ugliness we now see daily. How so we get back to those civil days?
- us/them dynamic.
- Meanness

- patience
- Remembering the golden rule
- [lack of] Kindness, listening
- A lack of civility, and mistrust without a real basis.
- We are very quickly becoming a less civil society. People can be mean spirited
- Many folks don't listen. They just add to the fray but don't want to hear reasonable explanations or the other side. This is in meetings and online, but online certainly fuels it.

*Unbalanced Voices:*

- Getting more voices heard. Not just the loudest.
- People speak, but are not listened to. Just a formality with a pre-concluded agenda.
- Meanwhile, more thoughtful long-term solutions coming from quieter or less organized quarters get short shrift.
- Encouraging participants to Become voices with solutions and not simply a platform for venting, bashing or bullying! The arenas for Sarcasm and historic grudges and discontents being removed from the problems.
- There are a few very opinionated people who tend to try to shout others down or intimidate to get their way. A few very vocal people slam away at it constantly on social media.
- Finding an alternative to all discussion being so Facebook-centric. This leaves out those who hardly or never use Facebook
- It seems to be the same small group that enjoys antagonizing each other online. I've approached one and asked them to stop and was met with a blank stare. This small group seems to stir the pot and steer the conversation away from the topic and make it about the personalities.
- A small group of people are controlling much of the public discourse, and these people are highly negative and rather than trying to understand the issue(s), simple take a bad attitude.
- A few people are quick to anger and assume negative intentions. These few people have an outsized impact on everyone's interactions.
- Some people with strong opinions will attack others for their opinions. I see this mostly on line. Official committees seem so far above everyone else that they are untouchable.
- High degree of defensiveness. Indignant over the slightest opinion. Not interested in facts or insight

*Use of Social Media:*

- Posting info on Social Media platforms... like meat to lions
- Online social commentary is nasty, personal, and oftentimes based in gossip or untruths. This makes it difficult to build consensus and accomplish positive changes in town, and it makes life here, which already has its challenges, harder.
- The Community Pages can get quite contentious, which turns folks off so they stop offering feedback. Many times, comments are downright rude or negative and don't offer anything of value.
- We are a small community. we need to learn to listen to each other. learn how to resolve conflict in a non-judgemental way. stop using online chatter to hurt others. ... I think the Provincetown community space should be shut down with new rules to participate. I believe in freedom of speech, but not freedom to hurt your neighbor. there are over 8000 people on the community space and only 3000 who live here. everyone is watching Provincetown air their dirty laundry. It's embarrassing.
- Too many unhinged, broken people who can't get along with anyone. Put them all in one place and you have complete dysfunction
- Uncivil arguments, online attacks and trolls, misogyny
- Disruptive / Insulting / Combative behavior in online forums.
- Trolls
- Women are not respected on Town talk. Many misogynist posts are left up much too long.

- For some reason all too often, an innocent post on Facebook is met with multiple negative reactions. I don't know why this is, but it can become toxic, and we need to find a way to change this.
- Very vocal minority on certain issues. Former residents and visitors on other pages make it difficult to understand where the voters really stand
- Online discussions are overwhelmed by non-residents who spread rumors, complaints, without having to live with their disruption
- Online brings out the worst in people. There needs to be more face to face interactions and discussions but need to take peoples schedules into account and have many of them
- Facebook is an inappropriate tool for civic communication. People come to it with all their social cliques and grudges. The tribal "us" vs "them" part time/full time poor/rich hot topic dividing flame wars make it useless.
- People on online forums can be pretty nasty
- The response on social media are pretty critical. People jump all over someone who has an opinion that is not aligned with their own. Also a lot of people have historical knowledge and alliances which most of us don't understand
- Relying too much on social media for information which is not usually balanced information and allows too much nonhuman contact communication without voice inflection or body language to assist in understanding another real perspective on issues.
- Social media exchanges devolve into mud-slinging, leaving the community polarized
- Town Talk needs to be open to everyone and comments should be limited to questions and answers about specific topics. Town Government (starting with BOS) needs to be more respectful of citizens and their comments, Town Government also needs to make sure that people stay on topic when speaking and be called out for inappropriate conversation
- People should talk more and post less.
- We need to talk with each other, in person not digitally. I went to the Saturday town forum for the first time in February. Learned a lot and felt part of the community.
- There are far too many armchair quarterbacks. Most people are only engaged online and at town meeting. Very few of the posters on social meeting actually belong to a committee or commission. If people were talking in person they would be more civil.
- Talk: not enough moderation and control of the ignorant comments. Treat: Not enough moderation on those who stir shit.
- Social media is a faceless way to vent and can get very opinionated. I find it offensive.
- I think that the forums we use can be problematic since a few folks seem to dominate them and there is shaming that

*Dislike/Distrust of Government Officials:*

- Let's start with our govt officials giving us the truth.
- I think the whole town governance system is questionable. It's hard to imagine the town is governed by all residents making decisions on all issues regardless of whether they have any experience or expertise to make those decisions.
- There are too many cliques controlling information. Information is not equally available to all tax payer voters. Town officials block their posts from voters regarding their opinions on town issues. There is basically no trust.
- Starts at the top, inappropriate, hostile burnt-out staff need training
- Town officials (certain Select Board Members and FinCom members) talking down to community members.
- The town government does its own thing while the community needs other things.
- The government getting involved in telling people how to interact.
- Friendship, relationships, special interests of the ruling folks get in front of the public voice. It has led to alleged acts of corruption. For Town Talk the moderators often can't handle the observations of what is alleged hurts.
- It is a toxic atmosphere in town hall. Lack of leadership. Employees who undermine the town.

- Town meetings are held during times many registered voters are out of town. Also warrants are not clear and often misunderstood resulting in wrong votes. Many rules and regulation seem to be excused when lots of money is involved for example for construction/renovation.
- No one agrees. Need more transparency. Things are done without proper channels being used.

*Too Personal/strong emotions:*

- Too personal, including town staff using personal accounts for public business
- It's too personal and everyone has too much emotion attached.
- anger and bias
- anger, impatience, differing visions of the future
- People are so arrogant here

*National Trend:*

- Civility is lacking - a national problem!
- The same challenges that affect all communities now. Provincetown is not special in that way. Like everywhere, there are so many divisions--on account of economics, gender, sexual expression mostly. Those are huge. The whole world is angry.
- Provincetown and the rest of the country seem to have lost their sense of civil discourse
- look at the political climate. People have been given the go-ahead to be jerks, and spout all kinds of garbage. No facts, say what you please... no civility, no face to face, all on social media. We have forgotten how to listen and negotiate.

*Other:*

- WE need more affordable housing and more income and security and then maybe we would be a bit more agreeable to each other
- Poverty People are hyper-critical of everything and don't offer much of a valuable opinion. They are the typical shoot first aim second kind of community.
- Longevity in Town.
- Apathy when it counts
- Complaints about decisions after they have been made in a public forum
- Are people really listening to each other?
- false accusations
- too political, too hostile.
- Growth that is safe and planned
- use feelings instead of facts
- Ignorance, Elitism, control freaks
- Of all the places I've ever lived or worked, this is the place where people are most dishonest with each other.
- I don't know because I avoid social media. In person talking is usually civil.
- Provincetown is not immune to national trends towards coarseness and destructive conflicts in discourse. People have forgotten how to disagree without being disagreeable, especially online. A vast majority of people on FB (and in town in general) are old enough to have no frame of reference for non-face to face, non verbal discourse. Things they would never say to someone's face or on the phone they say all the time online. My standard test is, "would I publish this on the front page of the Banner?" before I hit enter and put something on FB. Far too many people don't ask that question, and unfortunately, a few really ENJOY stirring the pot and inciting everyone around them.
- There is an established but fluid hierarchy in town that allows some people to believe they have more of a stake in town than others: townie, wash ashore, long time resident, summer people, second homeowner. Each of these titles, and more, are constantly shifted so individuals can feel as if they have a more prominent claim to authority.  
Town is loaded with snarky, back-stabbing, social-climbing jerks. There's something about the

morals/values of the current dominant population. There's a lot of open and organized misandry on social media.

- Ageism and sexism
- Gender and race discrimination. Street drugs. Dangerous driving
- Ego
- Many nasty comments are posted by some year round residents who have an exaggerated sense of entitlement.
- the recalcitrance of those who oppose things without the facts and without participating in the processes.
- A sometimes monolithic ideology

**Q9: What are the negative impacts of incivility (disrespectful treatment of people w/ differing views) in the community?**

Themed Responses:

*Moving Away:*

- I know at least 4 people who have moved away, after being heavily involved in town issues, precisely because of the toxic environment. My husband thinks I'm crazy being as involved as I am and refuses to get involved at all, even though the town would benefit enormously from his expertise.
- I moved to Truro in 2013 after 17 years having served on many local Town committees. The joy of public and community service wasn't possible because of the toxic environment perpetuated by the local FB political pages.
- people are moving away. locals are disheartened with the current state of affairs in town. the toxicity is at a heightened level. I had two different dates with friends last week. people in different circles. the topic of how toxic the town has become came up in conversation. How come people are leaving? comments about -- If you're not an "A-lister" you not anyone... Comments about the exclusivity in the town. we're supposed to be the most inclusive town, but we're not. Straights downing gays. Misogyny. Money vs no money.
- Re "People move away" - perhaps emotionally

*Town Divided:*

- A town of separation. Uninvolved .
- Bottom line: We all are going to have a fractured community. We have a lot of potential that is being lost due to incivility.
- I hear that some just won't say anything as there is harsh feedback
- I am shocked at attitudes displayed by some residents toward town officials & the intolerance of some groups for other groups. Although I'm a part-timer, I am sympathetic to concerns of full-timers, but some of the latter group make it hard to be supportive. I often feel like I am not wanted in Ptown.
- It creates an atmosphere of extremes. Online forums foster this - it's much easier for people to attack others when it's not face to face

*All-around poor environment in town:*

- People tend to share their honest opinions only with others they trust. so it's hard to know how people really feel about an issue, until we vote on town hall floor
- Fear for safety both personal and business. The cruelty online also comes with stalker like research into people's pasts.
- Provincetown is a town of phony jerks. It's all a lie- the rainbows, freedom, human rights. Eat or be eaten.
- The wrong people are discussing important issues. The right people stay out of the toxicity.

- Many residents and property owners I know in Provincetown do NOT participate on social media for Town matters because the "signal to noise ratio" is far too high, people are far too rude and it is considered a waste of time.
- Makes this special place more like everywhere else.
- One must at least vote!
- wrong information spread around
- Poor policies and lack of vision. The town could be in a much more progressive place if we didn't have the incivility and distrust issues.
- It creates a toxic environment
- If the subject and actions are believed to so egregious, I expect there will be, and should be legal consequences for the town.

**Q10: Some might suggest that changes need to be made to Town Talk to improve civil discourse (how people communicate with/treat each other).**

Themed Responses:

*Posts only, no comments:*

- It would function fine as a place where notices are posted for information purposes. The commenting is just horrible, and has driven all the reasonable voices away such that people don't even go there for posts on important issues any more.
- Remove comments
- It should be a Page for Communicating TO the public only. if people have opinions, they can go SEE or talk to an official. the old fashioned way.
- No need to let people comment. Safe to just impart information now. Originally it did it's job to divert attention from mypacc- mission accomplished!
- it should be post-only just like the town department & board pages (DPW, Police, recycling committee, bike committee, etc.) - or just shut it down completely and make the front page of the town web site the place for all current news from the town. Stop posting things unrelated to the town's business
- If Town Talk is run by the town, it can't be censored (1st Amdt). Nor can town officials censor public comments if comments are allowed. It either has to be a one-way communication mechanism or a free for all. If you want civility, the former is your only option.

*Impose limits on Town Talk:*

- Try what I clicked first - if that doesn't help, then make it post only from town staff, or strictly focused on town committee and staff work, so that, for instance, the RREC can continue to post about projects on Town Talk to ensure as many people as possible know about it.
- At a minimum, limit rebuttal/ replies to "please come to xxx meeting to discuss and learn more" "please call me xxx to discuss during regular business hours. Clearly define protocol; this is to inform but not debate. Eliminate expectation that this is a suitable forum for discussion; formal discussion should take place in the venues such as meetings and community sessions. Perhaps introduce monthly or quarterly calls as an alternative to scoop up this feedback more readily. Allow posts by others in a "suggestion box" format with no commenting; implement other tools that would enable stakeholders to vote up or down on suggestions to help stack rank ideas encourage private messaging to the Town Manager and have him provide answers to selected posts
- Maybe limit the number of posts a person can put up in a certain time. To keep the people who constantly post from taking over the forum.
- Define parameters for discussion, then follow a zero tolerance policy.
- Mostly end it. Definitely limit it to posts from staff and turn off comments. Let people vomit on their own or one of the many other pages. Discourse on FB is garbage and Ptown ain't changin' that for all the money in the world.

- This is a universal problem with any forum that allows commenting. Blocking, warnings, etc. pave the way for others to take their place... or to regroup and create their own separate "echo chamber" FB group. Even the NY Times disables commenting on many articles. Best to restrict to town staff/officials and perhaps eliminate comments on certain "sensitive" posts.
- I've never seen Town Talk. However, if the purpose is to solicit community input and receive information, replies to posts should only come from town officials responsible for area related to the post.

*Stop using Town Talk entirely:*

- Put it to bed. Buh bye
- stop trying to use Facebook for this purpose. it does not work.

*Other:*

- How is this any different from MYPAC?
- Town Talk should have regular moderators, but perhaps they could be volunteers. Those selected should have a job description, be interviewed, behave professionally. They should be treated the same as committee members. It should not just be turned over to any community member who wants to do it.
- Do NOT please pay a cent to have this moderated. If people could hear how they sound on that site arch, condescending, taunting and entitled they would be embarrassed
- I did not choose the "no blocking allowed" option, but this is a difficult problem. Facebook does not provide the ability to "make all posts public, regardless of personal account settings" - if it did this would not be an issue. No elected or appointed official should be FORCED to engage with ANYONE on social media, especially if they have blocked an individual for belligerent conduct. The argument that "as a resident and/or taxpayer I have the RIGHT to see posts on Town Talk made by ANY/ALL Town officials", also carries weight - but unless Facebook provides an ability to make ALL posts "public and viewable by all" this puts the rights of the belligerent individual in conflict with the official's right to privacy and freedom of association. One possible solution is ALL Town officials who post on Town Talk MUST have a separate login SOLELY for that purpose, and that login cannot block anybody. Mark Hatch is presently doing this today, but the "downside" is officials will be less likely to monitor and comment on posts in a timely fashion if it involves logging out of their "main" Facebook account and logging in to a "Town Use Only" account. We are already seeing this in the case of Mark Hatch, who had previously been a regular, valuable contributor to Town Talk but now barely posts ever. Facebook is not an ideal platform for this type of dialogue, but it IS the platform that MOST use for social media.
- While a hired moderator might help the Town Manager who must have elephant-thick skin, there is something appealing and important about being only one step removed from the Town Manager.
- I believe elected and appointed government officials should not be allowed to post comments on social media. Town Talk may be an exception but other Facebook pages, etc. should be off limits to posting by officials if they want to serve. They can read but should not post.
- Not sure about eliminating comments...
- Find a real alternative that's not online. Need not replace but should coexist and be real
- Town Talk should not limit membership. Should be open to the public.
- Whether protected by law or not, censoring free speech is a dangerous precedent that invokes a range of emotions.
- Town talk is a great way to disperse information. I would turn off comments. If there are questions, is there a way to submit and get all answered by staff only. Leave out the public comments. I like Provincetown Wind and Sea because all meetings are posted with link to agenda and the live stream link to PTV. No other social account does that.

## Q11: What role should Social Media/Town Talk play in Town decision making?

### Themed Responses:

#### *It should play no role:*

- None. I almost changed my mind about living here after finding the FB town spaces. Best to have open doors than social media madness
- None unless it's a controlled environment or survey
- None. While it can be a good place to express your views, if residents are asked to be involved in a Town decision, a formal process would be necessary. It's usually the same group of people that are on Social Media making comments, and they don't represent all of the community residents.
- Minimal or none.
- Absolutely None. For example, a media site's credibility drops to the bottom once Twitter is cited as a source. Tweets are not news. As such, the squeaky wheels of Social Media (FB) are more often than not the vocal minority and are not part of the decision making process. This is why there are elections and town meetings.
- None. Go to the meetings!
- None, and if you are using it to make decisions about what happens in the town you've made a huge mistake.
- None. People should publicly express their opinions at committee meetings, public forums and town meetings
- Social media should not play a role in Town decision making

#### *Minimal Role:*

- Very little
- A very low or no role as not every resident subscribes to social media and social media does not reflect the towns majorities views on issues!
- Not much. it should be balanced with input from other sources...talking to people especially.
- Decision making? It should be part of public input but a small part. Grow up people!
- Very little. If people want to be involved there are more productive ways to do it. There is a very small group the comment the loudest. But they should not direct how decision making in town is done.
- It is just ONE of many avenues of communication and education. It must NOT be the primary avenue.
- Limited. Only to deny bigoted posts.
- Only part, as many people don't have time to participate in social media, and some folks dominate there.

#### *Source of Information:*

- Information resource that is viable and trustworthy.
- Important way to get information and to follow discussions
- it can help form people's decisions
- It should offer a source of information to allow us to be more prepared for town meeting or changes to things like recycling, parking, and construction. No official town decisions should be made via social media.
- It should offer information on which decisions can be based.
- Promote Town Sponsored Activities
- I think it should be a way to inform people and nothing more.
- Not sure its role should be anything other than informational--maybe expand to include rational explanations on questions, much like the voting guide sent out by the state.
- Only to disseminate facts and answer genuine questions. Social media in general does not yet know how to support effective debate.

- As only one source of data for decisions -- it's only a select group right now that comments and may not be representative of the majority.
- It should accurately inform community members about what is happening in town government and with big important issues in town in a fair, timely manner.
- I think it might be best to use it to post real time town business and pertinent town issues as they are and allow interested citizens to ask questions and offer suggestions.
- Town Talk should be used for providing information. People still need to participate in the process. Go to meeting, get involved, be informed, and form their own opinions.
- None. Use it for announcements. If discussions occur, great, but it's a skewed version of what people want/think. Not to be used for decision making
- None , Just report the facts so voters can decide
- None. It should be for information dissemination only
- None, it's supposed to be, and usually is, a place to announce what's going on in town government - nothing more, nothing less.
- None. It's a forum for information. It's not a decision-maker. This question doesn't make sense.
- I think it should be used to inform but not discuss. The troll mentality is too strong. Let people discuss in person forums
- Info sharing, transparency, disclosure, community building, fast-turn-around civic news alerts
- Social media should be considered but not as valuable as in person input or professional mailed correspondence
- One of many sources to learn facts of issue.
- Just lay out the facts
- Improve and consistent information flow
- - informational - opinion of T.M. is fine too, should he want to put up with the grief.
- To spread information but not act as a discussion board.
- None. Results at polls count. Speaking up at meetings count. Comments on post reveal only the ones who ARE online. Not all people spend time online. Public information/facts - not pushing an agenda or wanting to create drama in media (Banner) or online.
- only information not opinions
- As a resource for objective and clear information about town issues so that better decisions can be made.
- It was great to see rumor and misunderstanding of fall town meeting articles addressed by staff. I think it answered many of the questions normally posed at town meeting.

*Medium for Discourse:*

- No formal role. It should be another medium for discourse
- Discussing important issues with everyone having the same access to input
- It should be used as a forum to give and receive information that's important and relevant to the Town. It's not a decision-making forum.
- This is the 21st century. It doesn't matter what you try to do. This is how people communicate, and some will believe and repeat anything. If you try to shut down one forum, another will open up. The only way to combat misinformation is with better information.
- The same as talking in person does (as long as it is with known members of the actual community).
- It should be a vehicle for spreading information and for respectful discussion of issues.
- Sharing information and views
- it shouldn't play a role. but steps have to be taken so people can feel heard (that's just Change Management 101)
- It should play a positive role in keeping us connected, as many of us are not physically in town as much as we'd like to be.
- It should provide some open discussion but ultimately should not be an active part of the actual decision making.
- It should just be an open forum but with guidelines.

*Provide insight:*

- Take the views of posters into consideration, but don't base decisions on them. Too many people vent on social media and I suspect some are not truly invested in the town's welfare.
- another source of input realizing it is a minority input
- Can highlight a problem early, but should not be used as a survey of town opinion same role as any other
- Gauge the community feelings regarding issues.
- listening to what people are saying is good
- Another point of view to be considered
- good voice and input...
- Just gives a selected sense of how those who post feel about town issues.
- Provide ideas and points of view, not decisions
- same as someone submitting letters or materials to town boards, etc
- Decision-makers need to weigh the input and perhaps seek out clarification, when needed.
- Only to serve as feedback for decision-making.
- Get the word out. Obtain feedback from citizens. Long threads on a particular topic are not helpful.
- A place to measure public sentiment on various issues helps our manager and select board make decisions
- the town must embrace social media but it should be clear the opinions are not actual votes and stress the importance of town meeting. The Chair of the BOS should never state that voters opinions are what she is looking forward and not that of property owners or others with a vested interest in the town. The opinions on town talk, social media and at public meetings outside of town meeting, should be welcomed and people should be thanked. The town needs to lead the charge in inclusiveness

*Should play a large role:*

- Significant. Biggest and best way to reach and engage more of town. Could be feeder to other system but must NOT stick head in sand
- Opportunity. If Town Hall representatives reached out to people whom are combative, negative and even on the rare occasion positive I think there is great opportunity to move forward.
- Posts on social media should carry the same "weight" as comments sent by US Mail, telephone or any other method. The beauty of social media is it provides a fast, easy and efficient means of communicating. It IS important, however, to consider WHO is commenting. I know Town Talk membership and ability to post is restricted to ONLY Town residents, property and business owners (i.e. those with a "vested interest" in Town matters). PCS on the other hand is populated MOSTLY by people that have no vested interest here, mostly people who formerly lived here and/or visit here on vacation.
- It will play a large role because everybody's on it and thinks they have an opinion that is valid
- It is an integral part of how the town communicates with people and the ability for people to discuss things. It needs to stay but needs to be moderated better so when people start to troll each other it gets taken care of quickly.
- A purpose built system is required where the town can communicate with all its citizens.
- officials should read and absorb the comments and opinions and then react to them to correct the issues as board members
- We should be able to log on to share politically correct answers to questions for a period of time, announced on the town website, and then this info can be loaded on website for others to review all together

*Other:*

- it's too difficult to answer with current protocol. it gets ugly out there on social media. how we communicate TO the public and communicate back should be re-engineered. Literally. let's re-design the process.
- depends on validity of facts
- sometimes the snappy, short, demeaning responses from some town board members and employees is Very, Very discouraging and unnecessary. It honestly puts a very negative insight to who & how the town operates, Not very Healthy, Happy or bipartisan at all. So Sad because it's Heaven On Earth!!! Every One needs to Lighten Up and tactics being part of the Solution & Not be optimistic. not so much the Problem. Practice, Practice, Practice.... Peace ....
- Any forum requires town meeting like rules to limit monopolization of topics and off topic ramblings.
- Continue Town Talk
- It is my opinion that the voice of the public must be protected. Town Talk and facebook are only one vehicle of the voice. If the true voice is sought, it can be obtained by survey and petition (hard copy, change.org, survey monkey, and a facebook tool on Town Talk). If you don't use multiple sources you are excluding members of the public.
- it needs to be taken into consideration
- It should continue to play a role.

**Q12: Thinking outside of online interaction, what else should be done to improve in-person civility/relationships and build community?**

Themed Responses:

*Improve Communication:*

- Listening to each other.
- Person to person interaction
- Foster greater and more positive communications by ignoring the nay-sayers and mean-spirited show-offs.
- One person at a time.
- Allow people to communicate freely.
- encourage please/thank-you model good behavior good/careful use of language
- Respect each other and recognize everyone has their opinion and is entitled to it. People talk about keeping Provincetown the same as years ago. Years ago, people would never say what they say today.
- Know your audience, have guidelines and contingency plans when appropriate.
- Decorum, manners and transparency
- Acknowledge each other on the street, stores
- Make announcement at all town meetings and gatherings that Provincetown follows this in all its interactions. Place plackets around town explaining how important it is to our town culture
- In any setting, listen and read with care. Never block or censor in a democratic society. Blocking, censoring, or presenting as true things that are not to promote an agenda will be met with anger.
- You can't fix crazy. The people that are not civil should be banned. Maybe they need to be taught how to participate civilly. Maybe if they were open to it, staff could offer suggestions on how to participate. Not sure how staff would have that time. Maybe they don't know how to be civil.
- Urge people to be proactive and find out the information from a reliable source to be in the know

*Offer more opportunities for in-person meetings:*

- Meet and greets by all the departments and they all need should be more visible. eg Police hold coffee giveaways where you can meet the officers and chat. The Town Hall employees need to be on top of everything and should be able to know all the consequences of any actions before they are proposed and voted on. The licensing department needs to be more efficient and helpful.

- Community building activities. Perhaps use town talk to promote service projects that other organizations are running like beach clean up.
- Social events. Dump dance, Commercial St. block party. Events where no one makes money
- Town wide activities where people can meet and mingle?
- Town hall type meetings
- More dances!
- singalongs at Town Hall
- More in person community forums and outreach
- More in-person events sponsored by town staff might help, but you can't make people go to them. Perhaps if they become regular enough people will.
- We are in very strange times. People are spending more and more time on devices. Human interaction at dismal rates.
- Hold more free year-round fun community events at town hall, such as movie nights, potluck night, etc. all at town hall.
- People talking face to face and taking responsibility is possible in this town, and should be encouraged.
- community meetings. I remember the community workshop years ago on community policing.
- People should meet IRL.
- I have no clue...what have other towns been successful in doing? Possibly get 'those people' more involved face to face somehow too.???
- More community building events that bring disparate people together.
- In person meet and greets to discuss issues with a moderator to keep things 'light'. With food to get people to participate.
- On a regular and well publicized basis have an opportunity for citizens to meet town officials and members of boards so they have an opportunity to get to know them and share their concerns or ideas with them. And at the same time meet other members of the community that they might not know.
- I'm relatively new to town. This community supports its people and level of support fundraising and volunteerism demonstrates this. We need to find a way to harness that sense of community activity toward town issues. There needs to be more outreach to newcomers and make them feel truly welcomed and understand why they moved here.

*Support year-round residents:*

- Hear the voices of YEAR ROUND RESIDENTS. Support them above all.
- The year-round community might benefit from monthly social gatherings with panels comprising people from various parts of the community. Ideas: the under 50 group -- business owners, straight couples, families with teenagers, etc. -- on what it feels like to live here; the people who are several generations in and what it feels like to see the town change over time, losing the robust fishing fleet; artists and writers on the challenges they face making a living here; etc. There are many ways to slice up the community and have people learn firsthand what it's like for people different from themselves. Of course, strict guidelines would need to be set so people feel safe sharing.
- More activities for people who actually live here. Tremendous effort is put into theme weeks but much less put into fun, team building activities for the community.

*Support part-time residents:*

- In person discussions on weekends so people who don't live full time can participate.
- Include everyone. Year round and part time residents. After all the part timers pay more in taxes already and really probably add more to the success of Provincetown.
- Facts and objective information provided to all members of the community would be helpful. Part-time residents are taxpayers and members of the community but are left out of the conversation. Or at least left out of the conversations that matter such as Town Meeting.
- Allow second homeowners to vote. Tax all property owners by an equal formula

- I feel like second home owners are not treated with much respect however we all have lots of great friends who are year-rounders. And we pay a great deal in taxes. There needs to be more sharing of everybody's opinion, not just registered voters. We all have a huge stake and what happens to Provincetown and we all care deeply. So it should not be one group versus another it should be all of us working together towards making everybody's life better.
- Invite seasonal residents to input at open forums.

*Decrease divisiveness:*

- There is a big us and them mentality. Year round vs part time, wealthy vs not, long timers vs new. Would be nice if we could find common ground. Since I'm a second home owner and can't vote I feel like I am treated different— taxes, voice etc. not subtle how to change this but positive events would help
- Perhaps having a public burial of the word Washashore. It is as ignorant and divisive as any other demeaning separatist pejorative. Reality is Every Ptowner past to present is one!
- "Us and them" vs. "Us not them" community building Addressing systemic social ills more aggressively to show the town is focussed on those divisive priorities Recognize that FB is only a small portion of Ptown residents and tends to attract the noisiest instigators. FB is not the standard in civil discourse. It's the reality show version of civil discourse.
- Stop dividing the town into artificial tribes. All residents should have a voice in town, including 2nd home owners.
- Not really sure, other than what I've already mentioned. View all homeowners and business owners as "the same". No need to separate part time vs. full time.
- The only thing I can think of is to stop the us v. them mentality. It's constant-men v. women, native residents v. wash a shores, people with money v. those without. Groups are constantly pitted against each other.
- be fair about judgements, some people seem to get away with bending the rules and then others held to letter-of-the-law. Also, stop making it about US and THEM: resident-part time second home owner; gay-straight; male/gay vs. lesbian/women; those with money VS. those without.
- Treat people equal. Have rules (parking) that aren't bent for some and not for all.

*In-person discussion sessions:*

- Smaller scale workshops/events dedicated to town issues.
- The recent Town Forums are a great idea!! Well attended and good participation...
- Discussion groups maybe?
- I feel that people are more civil in person vs online. Maybe more events like the Forum.
- An In Person "Town Talk"/ forum invitingly done and advertised for residents scheduled at appropriate times so people can attend and be heard.
- Tough thing to do... keep offering forums and trainings.
- encourage attendance to smaller events at Town Hall or elsewhere so people can meet in smaller groups.
- Town Forums are very good. It might be worth inviting interested people to join a webinar/online chat to discuss other ideas for events. Maybe more structures to support volunteers who want to help with Town Talk, events, etc.
- Encourage round tables, discussion groups, etc at locations that are not in town hall (library, coffee shops, restaurants, etc).
- scheduled informal sharing sessions...face to face and social
- Additional forums for public input and collab. Leverage and engage more 2nd homeowners
- if the only in-person interaction is town meetings and votes or board approval sessions you have far more negative to counteract. Need to have more opportunity to discuss like last Saturday's session at town hall or conference calls where people can feel heard.
- Have in person forums at town hall.
- Have a forum on ethics

- That's a tough one. There seems to be a male vs female division in town in addition to all of the nastiness. Maybe hold some type of moderated discussion groups quarterly to get people to talk face to face and debate topics as civil adults.
- The town should offer classes in how people can respectfully disagree and try to reach common ground
- Most people behave better when they have face to face interaction in Town Forums, Town Meeting, Town Committees.
- I believe most people are civil in person even though they may not be on social media.
- Is in-person civility a problem? The same people who are completely UNCIVIL on social media generally seem to be much more civil in-person. Sadly, social media makes it easy to be uncivil, and brings out the worst in some people.
- People tend to be very civil when they're not online

*Changes in government /official groups:*

- New town manager
- Recognize the chamber and pbgs and businesses are not citizens groups, have cost of entry and different priorities than residents on direction, investment. Should not run boards or get ten money, and certainly not to further anti-Lgbt unwelcoming agenda
- You could start with a new Town Moderator who behaves with more civility from the podium at Town Meeting. The same is true for some Board and Committee chairs and members. A former boss who chaired a congressional committee had an adage: "It's not enough to be fair. It's important that you appear to be fair." These folks could take a lesson.
- In Town Meeting, stop letting one person continually put an end to discussion when he thinks it's time to stop. Golden has 'called the question' sometimes after only a few people have spoken. It's tyranny and undemocratic.
- Honesty from town officials would be a great start
- Govt telling the truth. That would be a novelty. Stop wasting time on surveys
- Better control at town meeting. Work to eliminate them (2nd homeowners) vs. us (year rounders) mentality prevalent in town
- Better communication about town board meetings for the public
- Have civility among our highest officials, the Select Board.
- Stop making behind the door decisions about the town
- Coffee with David Panagore at the Library was a good start. Something similar with selectmen might help.
- elected officials need to hold office hours, and departments should hold open houses so people can meet staff - especially the new hires
- more accessibility of board members to the community, by their own doing and availability for the public to reach out to them.
- Staff need training customer friendly
- "welcoming" members of Town Hall at meetings
- You should have no social media footprint whatsoever that's including the police.
- While most unlikely, I do think that if every resident served on a board, it would improve civility, understanding and community cohesion
- training for town employees on how to be pleasant, supportive and helpful.
- Training for those on committees/Boards to follow rules of order. Newspapers to stop back scandal seeking and "rumor has it" reporting
- A town newsletter might be a good idea and more opportunities for public interaction at meetings. Maybe select board meetings should allow public comments during specific agenda items.
- Post notices in public places to encourage civility.
- How about a yearly "thank you" event sponsored by the town to honor the many volunteer board members - a dinner or party where major accomplishments are celebrated either by a specific committee or individuals, like honor the person who has served for the most number of years, the

most number of committees at once, the newest committee member, the committee felt to have contributed the most that year, the person who contributed the most that year, etc. ANYthing that acknowledges the hard and often thankless work that committee members do.

once the new police station project has achieved consensus, I think a lot of tension will be lifted. the relationship between the PPD and the town, including the station project, has been a source of major tension, for a long time.

- Establish a town-wide physical calendar with standard size cards for posting events. Put it in Town Hall lobby. Maybe have web-cam of it on town website. Realize it would necessarily be pretty large.
- The biggest level of discourse and negativity are about 6-12 shit starters who are given too much attention to town related social media. The town needs to stop reacting to them as they do not represent the majority.

#### *News sources:*

- Watch the tone in The Banner. I'm thinking of the headline "Part Time Homeowner Cuts Down Trees for View". From actually reading the story it appears the homeowner was not aware of the rule that they need permission to trim trees in their own yard (to my knowledge this is not a typical rule for many towns), and when they were made aware they apologized and paid the fine. A better approach for The Banner might be to educate folks on our town's rules, and most of us will chose to follow them.
- Better news reporting in the local paper.
- The added problem is we have a local paper that seems focused on creating controversy to sell papers. I'm not sure if this can be addressed but IMHO it compounds the problem with the online forums.

#### *Other:*

- People should act their age
- I wish I knew. Frankly I'm pretty horrified by some of the behavior I'm seeing - hysteria, character assassination, and, of all things, blatant misandry from some in our lesbian community. And I'm a woman
- More positive posts about the wonderful aspects of Provincetown.
- Get rid of Town Talk
- run negative destructive people out of town on a rail
- I am at a loss.
- Since human nature will prevail despite best efforts, expect incivility and plan accordingly.
- I think it is too late.
- Sleepovers
- we're not in that bad a situation in town, I feel. We are a group of people who speak openly and I think it is fantastic. Of course it is also beyond sad to have some folks twist facts around and seem to get such a sense of power and excitement by railing.
- We can't have policy being driven through town talk or online— see recent nyt articles about how Facebook spreads discord. Is there another place where folks could naturally and inpwrd on plug into the system and feel heard
  - Note: believed to be referring to <https://www.inpwrd.com/>
- Folks who are active commenters online should get involved in real-world decision making in person.
- Transparency
- there's a general impression that there's a huge lack of civility in the town. visitors don't feel it (although they can feel it on the community space). but, once you live here, you can feel it - especially if you're exposed to committees and boards (not ALL). the "watercooler" talk is rampant in town. employers let anything go. harassment. drugs. inappropriate language. I have heard about abusive situations (not physical, but verbal)... this can cause physical and mental problems... -- I think the entire town needs to go through sensitivity training; conflict resolution

and customer service but more just how to be nice to each other.. it's so simple. business owners need to be coached on creating a culture of civility. they need to be held accountable. and, it's not just the businesses. people who live here and spend all day online -- need the training, too... it's a vicious cycle.

- This is a societal problem. We are merely reflective of the broader challenge.
- Vetting of profiles
- Increase year round housing/jobs, do not cater to tourists
- Separate the public from the personal

**Q13: What would you personally be willing to do or what have you done to help improve civil discourse?**

Themed Responses:

*Do not engage online:*

- Already gave up
- I actively avoid conflict
- Avoid it and stay alive.
- I just withdraw and don't participate in the hate
- I try and stay out of it
- Sadly nothing. As a business owner in town I believe it would be detrimental to what is an already challenging environment.
- Nothing
- I moved away
- Keep my mouth shut
- Watch and listen.
- I live out of state.
- I have strong opinions and have stopped posting comments. I have been involved in some online discussions that have gone awry and no longer want to be a part of those.
- Stay off the threads on social media.
- Stopped participating online.
- I have started to be very careful about what I say online. Not just in town, but universally.
- I tried but I will not be attacked by ignorant people
- not much, I'm afraid.
- Not posting on line. By nor doing so, it doesn't add more fuel to the toxic environment and is much healthier!
- I simply just don't participate in these forums any more. I talk to people personally instead.
- I for the most part keep to myself on these issues, commenting only on facebook when i can reinforce good behaviour. as a part time resident there is a certain amount of toxicity to "outsiders" so i also walk that line.
- I don't encourage or engage the crazy. The arms length "anonymity license" of social media normalizes behaviors not acceptable in other channels.

*Participate(d) in an official role:*

- I'm a member of FinCom, so I'm already pretty engaged. I do not get involved in the FaceBook posts that spin out of control. If I have an issue with someone or a certain subject, I'll pick-up the phone or meet with someone in-person.
- I'm on several committees and happy to interact with citizens by answering their questions at meetings or on the street.
- In the past, when I lived in town I served on committees and sought different opinions when confronting issues.
- I am already involved on a board and attend town meetings,vote.
- I'm on a town board that addresses a controversial project. I think more in person opportunities can help silence some of the noise/misinformation that percolates online.

- I have volunteered for the town which I have recently stopped doing because it is unappreciated and criticized.
- I stay off the sites where uninvolved people bitch about those who do contribute (I'm on a board).
- Have been fair and objective while serving on town board.
- Help with dump dance.

*Show/Respond with kindness/respect:*

- I can only promote civility and respect of all persons
- be kind and listen
- Say hello and smile!
- Just be nice
- Write letters regarding issues that I feel strongly about. Be respectful
- I practice kindness
- Only take a civil tone.
- model good behavior
- continue being civil
- When I speak personally to Town officials, I try to be civil and courteous, whether I agree or disagree, whether I'm happy or unhappy. And I try to remember not to burn any bridges over any single issue or problem. Sometimes, with some people - especially with the kind of people referred to in the previous answer - it's hard.
- I have always attempted to be civil and polite in my online interactions and have tried to answers posed to me in a complete, honest and polite way.
- Treat everyone kindly, even when snubbed as a part-time resident / wash ashore / outsider
- Tell folks to play nice
- Be gentle with people with whom you disagree. Try to dispel anger rather than inflame it. Don't Mock posters.
- In my writing and speaking on any issue to any member of the community, I strive to be respectful. I actively solicit information and ask relevant questions. I encourage my friends to do the same regardless of how others behave.
- I try to set an example with the tone of my online posting and ignore the posts of folks who deserve to be ignored. almost the modern version of the old amish 'shunning' technique.
- Be civil and respect the views of others
- Just listening, not be evaluative, active listening skills
- I engage in online encounters in a respectful manner
- Do not comment on snarky items on line or ignore comments in meetings and stick to the real issues. Hand out compliments whenever possible.
- Think before I speak
- I've responded to person attacks with polite meaningful comments
- Think critically and empathetically before posting
- Practice posting only respectful, lighthearted, non pretentious feedback and insights.
- I think people just want to be heard, so the first thing to do is listen... and then respond appropriately and with correct information. Always try to set the example of what acceptable behavior can look/sound like.
- Listen to other people's views before offering my view. Accepting other views as that... their view.
- No personal attacks on postings.
- My perspective is "do no harm" and agree to disagree. The old saying... "I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."
- I have only become more quiet. I am willing to report bad behavior. I am committed to posting positive town news and activity as well as applauding other community members in public settings.

*Actively discourage negativity:*

- Call out negativity and change the topic
- I have asked people tone down nasty rhetoric.
- Call out trolls
- Continue to be civil, report uncivil posts to moderators. If a decision is ever made to have residents moderate posts I would be happy to volunteer to help. My work and lifestyle has me on the internet and Facebook regularly, and I am sensitive to "poorly worded comments" that may appear to be uncivil vs. outright belligerent.
- I've at times played Devil's Advocate to further a discussion amongst peers. I've ignored aggressive responses and remarks. I've interrupted rude threads with facts that were needed.

*Provide Information:*

- Engage people on other side of issues and spend time teaching and learning. Have changed gut position in light of info.
- I continue to remind people that sticking to actual facts, checking your emotions, and remembering that we mostly all have the best interests of the town at heart even if we disagree on how to do that, is primary. I am too new (and too young) known to lecture people on how to behave - but I can help lead by example
- Try to state educated opinions in a way that is not judgmental of or adversarial to others
- Give information without judgement
- Stop mansplaining
- Fact-check posts
- It might help to do a public education campaign to help explain to people the basics of some of the town's challenging issues. So many comments are made by people who are uninformed and only speaking out of their own self-interest.
- explain the facts as presented and then translate them into what can be expected down the line as a result of the decisions
- I try to post things that look at both sides of an issue.

*Actively participate(d):*

- Participate
- Talking to selectboard
- attend more meetings and make more positive comments about successful items in town
- suggest something, [and] I'm game. It's tough to have a discussion on social media but in person I attempt to listen to people and diffuse negative energy.
- I managed the city of Boston's social media presence and would love the opportunity to assist and advise the town of Provincetown in harnessing a passionate digital community on and off line.
- Attend community forums on topics that interest me.
- I do not feel safe sharing my thoughts in a public forum. If there is a way to help behind the scenes, I would be willing to consider that. If civility improves, then I would reconsider.
- I haven't been involved in civil discourse. It's pointless. When I attend meetings, I listen to the viewpoints being expressed. I've had my opinion changed.
- Happy to consult on building a new platform outside of facebook for this purpose.
- Offer suggestions on better [ways] to participate. Offer examples on other ways to present their point.
- Go to in-person meetings, help find solutions. help volunteer on projects that will help the town.

*Participate(d) in moderated/ in-person Forums /dialogues:*

- I was happy to learn of the recent Town Forum and glad that I (as a non-resident property owner) was able to participate. We should do more events like this.

- I would be willing to meet with people in person with a moderator present to share and listen to other perspectives. I have attempted to have reasonable discussions with people of different views.
- Participate in moderator involved discussions.
- I am moving from town. but, what I would do could be done by others: hold focus groups. let people share their opinions IN PERSON -- NOT online. create a plan from these meetings. doing this survey is a good first start. .. create a vision statement around Civility for the Town. Create a Plan. State a goal that Provincetown become ONE OF THE HAPPIEST AND NICEST TOWNS TO LIVE IN AND WORK IN. (not just visit) -- and, then create a roadmap on how to get there. Do anti-bullying sessions. employ the services of a group to train and coach people How to Disagree Constructively. ... With all that said -- I love the town. and everything else about it.
- I would like to see an arena where I was comfortable speaking out about what is going on in town, without being attacked, as I have been. Things seem to be very one-sided in the wonderful world of social media, even though many I talk to privately don't agree.
- as recently as the town forum I have been known to speak up in a rational manner, also to ask people not to interrupt, to speak informally with people who aren't the big talkers/time stealers in the group; in other words, ignore the loud mouths and help the others to understand and to be understood by a give & take conversation--I learned this in kindergarten, I think
- Attended town forum

*Other:*

- Leave meetings that are offensive to me
- Improvement efforts usually backfire. I wish there were a way to start over.
- I would be all for signing a petition to get the town to stop posting on Facebook.
- I am writing a case to sue the town and certain named paid and volunteer officials. The AGs office is interested as are private lawyers. You see if you have been wronged, the only way with teeth is the legal system.
- Refrain from judgement unless laws are broken
- I've done lots but nothing really changes.
- It is extremely difficult to help given how so many have been treated by town officials during the last 18 months or so.
- I would get more involved if I was allowed.
- I would be more engaged if it seemed like the town really was interested in what part time residents thought.
- Offer courses on civility
- I listen, I keep myself up to date, and I vote.

**Q14: What does this survey not address/ask that could improve civil discourse?**

Themed Responses:

*Changes to effort at leadership level:*

- New Town Manager
- Town Staff and Board attitudes and willingness to help townspeople and residents
- The unpleasant comments from some members of Boards (e.g., Historic)
- Leadership. I believe when Town Talk started Mr. Panagore kept a civil conversation. He's too busy for moderating the page. The page should just be used to disseminate information. That would keep the maintenance/moderation to a minimum.
- Increase transparency on decisions made by town Hall. Fewer executive sessions
- The Town Manager is not leading.
- Who/what are you afraid of in town social discourse. [...]
- You didn't ask anything about town leaders and what can they do. Or the moderators on these sites.

- Accept that in a small town it is part of culture. I reject incivility by anyone who holds a public position. Leaders need to lead by example.
- Poor communication when conducting town business aka the shit show that is sal's place.
- town officials drinking less would be great.
- Leadership
- Much of which the town was doing their due diligence but did not relay that information properly.
- Why all the seemingly under the radar, non transparent town business and decision making goes on.
- We should vote at town meeting in writing. NOT by raising hands. This is a small town where people are intimidated by raising hands on some key issues.
- we need a website where people can ask questions and get authorized answers from staff - there should also be some kind of complaint box like Boston's 311 system so you don't have to call the town manager or figure out who at DPW is the right person to notify about a missing street sign, pothole, or abandoned bike

#### *Limit Role of Social Media:*

- Why you are so concerned about civil discourse you're creating the problem so stop writing stuff on Facebook.
- Turn off comments on posts from town officials; use town talk as a bulletin board for announcements
- these platforms by their nature destroy civil discourse. Maybe they shouldn't be used
- Personal responsibility. There is a belief by some that they should have complete, unfettered, bi-directional access to ALL Town Officials on Facebook REGARDLESS of their conduct. This is not true, failure to comply with generally accepted norms of conduct would NEVER be tolerated in person, in Town offices and at Town meetings and will not be tolerated on social media. Publish rules of conduct, if a member violates the rules give them a warning complete with a notice that if it happens again within 3 months their ability to post (but not to read) will be suspended for 3 months. This is consistent with the same rules of personal conduct one might impose in person, social media interactions should have the same requirements.
- Knowing who are the real constituents in online forums would be helpful. I don't know how that is achieved.
- Even a highly moderated town page or group may not affect discourse in other groups, and those interactions spill over into the real world.
- An ever present contingent of users who enjoy drama in the comments section, even if just in a voyeuristic sense.
- How many people in Provincetown are ACTUALLY ON FB?!? If its an echo chamber for only 10% of the actual community, it's just not worth all this aggravation - shut it down. If it reaches 50-60% of the voters, that's entirely different - but we have no data at all.
- probably the role of an administrator on a facebook page. it's a lot of work, so few have the time it takes to do it well. I do not believe that gov't can do it. I don't.
- How much time people spend on social media? It appears a select few are always available to comment immediately to the latest social media post. How do they find the time?

#### *Improve resident behavior:*

- Push the positive side of discourse
- one-one talking to offenders - maybe
- There is a large discrepancy between how older people and younger people use social media in town. The younger people seem to "get it" while the older folks seem to have more problems understanding what is appropriate. It increases the divide between the generations and, in the end, adds another reason why young people don't get involved in town politics.
- The anger many people have regarding changes of the town. Haves and Have nots. In most towns there is the Wealthy area and the Middle and the Lower Income. Here it's all tightly packed against each other. I happen to love that but many find it difficult

- Foul degrading language. Gay men have appropriated words that are derogatory to women and use them in their discussions that are open to the public. No longer acceptable by women, the fight back and lack of understanding by them is not acceptable.
- There are decidedly "mean" folks that regularly are rude or derail a discussion. I'm wondering if there are or could be guidelines for removal of these violators from the forum.
- Some sort of mechanism is needed where people from all walks of Ptown life can talk about this issue.
- Training about misogyny The boys club here is ruining town
- More transparency. None of these things like police station budget funding without really looking at it and letting to vote
- How to have a dynamic communication that is interesting, informative, and open.
- How to keep people on topic rather than grandstanding.
- Double standards of gender bigotry. Look at \*redacted\*, \*redacted\* and \*redacted\* and \*redacted\* and \*redacted\* posts and substitute "Jews" for "men" .....
- First you have to create a warm and welcoming environment
- Ways to bring straights, gays, and lesbians together. Lately, in town politics, it seems to be the woman vs. the men in very mean spirited ways.
- Expect that some of the loudest incivil people will be immune to any attempts to improve. Best to focus on the other 90%
- Using skill sets of second homeowners. We can help but are not being leveraged.
- How to try to get people to make policy disagreements about policy and not about whether they like/do not like an individual.
- More face-to-face interaction -- town forums, open committee meetings, informal gatherings.

*Other:*

- People get cranky and don't have enough to do in the off season. Be aware of the seasonal effects of the discussion.
- Would you be willing to attend one or more sessions with a facilitator to discuss with other residents strategies for improving civil discourse in Provincetown?
- Just before launching this survey, I was removed from Town Talk without reason provided and without notice. What does that say about Ptown oligarchs and bureaucrats. It just more motivation to topple a corrupt government.
- Outrageous building, making exception to formulary business and ignoring fairness and integrity on the town. Allowing pot shops that will invite legal drug use in a town that has a gross amount of people with severe addictions. Shameful
- Not getting to the heart of the matter, why are people so angry?
- Consideration of vision impairment - partial or whole that prevents use of online access
- Mental Health..... of too many is questionable. Or are they under the "influence" of something when they rant or voice opinions.
- It assumes that people want to improve civil discourse. I don't think that's the issue. Venting and snark are normal in a reality-TV world where everyone is auditioning for most outrageous. It's bigger than Ptown. What gives people license to be uncivil? Trump? He's more evidence. It's generalized intolerance that social media somehow amplifies or makes entertainment or makes normal. This is end of the empire stuff.
- I am VERY PLEASED that our town leaders are taking the initiative to ASK EVERYONE these questions. THANK YOU !!!

**Q15: Are there any additional comments that you would like to make?**

Themed Responses:

*Calls for Peace & Respect:*

- Only that I am astounded every day that people aren't able to look around at the beauty of our home, feel so incredibly grateful, and then channel that into good will for those we share our

space and lives with out here. Thank you for doing this work. I look forward to seeing the outcome.

- I am not comfortable with the perception of what I call the us v them. People who are affluent should not be villainized . People who are not affluent should not be looked down upon. I believe we all share a love for Provincetown. I believe some of the incivility we see comes with a great deal of conviction and emotion about what people think is right for Provincetown.
- Yes. This beautiful town has long been known as a haven of beauty and acceptance...whether for a Day trip , vacation or as a resident. Respect : toward neighbors, visitors, full timers, part timers would be a wonderful addition. If you need a shining example go the Post Office.That crew knows how it's done!
- There is always going to be disagreement. But the more "inclusive" we are, the better our results will be.
- Yes, let's keep talking
- How to "call out" those comments that do nothing but create division and do not address the matter at hand.

#### *Social Media:*

- In my opinion, Town Talk has been THE most divisive thing I've seen in this Town in the over 25 years I've been coming here. It has been responsible for more neighbors truly fighting with each other than any other event. It honestly should go away. The discussions are toxic to the community.
- just because there is social media doesn't mean that the town needs to interact and it doesn't mean that every comment should even be taking seriously do your job.
- It seems this is the same conversation we're having on a broader level with privacy and Facebook.
- I don't believe town leadership can handle social media. they do not want to hear the truth and want pre-packaged posts and thinking. they fear what they say they want.
- Select Board members need to lead by example. They are frequently stirring the pot and should also use community spaces to give information, no debating. I suspect many of them have violate open meeting laws with their debating.
- Delete town talk and try to get more civil discourse on the other pages.
- Women's voices are not heard in this town on social media.
- Dump Town Talk or make it staff posted/no comments only. Questions can be messaged, and, if deemed necessary, answered in comments by staff.
- Social media is a VERY valuable tool to provide quick, easy and timely interactions with Town officials. I would hate to lose this capability and have to rely on in-person, telephone and US Mail to provide this capability. I understand the challenges in providing ALL residents, business and property owners equal access, but cannot emphasize enough how important personal responsibility must be coupled with that access. Likewise, ALL elected and appointed Town officials have an ABSOLUTE RIGHT to privacy and freedom of association in their personal lives, and should NOT be forced to associate with ANY individual that has treated them uncivilly - unless Facebook provides the ability to set up a Group where ALL posts can be seen by all REGARDLESS of personal privacy settings, it seems like separate accounts for personal and Town business are the only solution available, which sadly discourages participation by Town officials for the reasons stated earlier (having to log off personal account, log on to Town account and read/respond to posts ONLY during this logon). :(
- There will always be people in Town who feel disenfranchised, but they are many times the same folks who complain, but don't get involved in any of the boards or committees. I've always lived in big cities, and I have to admit, I wasn't prepared for some of the small-town pettiness that's present here. Regardless, it's a wonderful place to be. Lastly, I think Town Talk is a great forum for communication. Can it be better?? Of course, so let's make its better. But the negativity about it, in my opinion, says more about the whiners than it does about a Town Manager who is

trying to be more transparent. As it's said, if you're not a part of the solution, you're a part of the problem...

- Social media is useful only till it's not! Person to person is always the best way. Perhaps more of what works is best for civil conversation in a group meeting face to face.
- The online negativity impacts my business and tourists' impressions of town as well as my own lived experience.
- Good luck. Online toxicity won't go away until people are happier off line.
- Social media as currently implemented amplifies fringe opinion over consensus. This is the opposite of democracy.
- I love this town and it's acceptance, but online reflects mostly the extreme views not the middle
- As the former creator and administrator of the first political FB page several years ago, I quickly realized the platform wasn't conducive for civility but rather toxicity. The only healthy and effective path is removing oneself from online debates completely which I did. I now enjoy Provincetown once again because I'm not involved in its dark and ugly social media underbelly nor serve on its committees.

#### Town Involvement:

- whatever the town decides to do, the tenor of the information should be positive. people shouldn't feel scolded. it should be introduced and launched with the idea of wanting to improve communication; improve relationships; improve the general well-being of living and working here - for residents and tourists alike. raising the bar, so to speak. .... we ARE a welcoming town. we always have been, i felt it when I moved here. I still feel it. I just have also seen the wrath of online miscommunication. it's dysfunctional. it brings out the beast in others, not the best..... thank you for asking.
- I think there should be more encouragement for people to participate in the process and attend informational sessions the town holds. People need to be explained the process, how to make a difference. You cannot expect us all to know how the Town government works. How we can help. How we can make a difference.
- Look at the Opengov.com platform for online discussions - it looks like it could do things that Facebook can't: <https://opengov.com/products/communications-and-reporting/open-town-hall>
- People don't want to serve on our town's volunteer regulatory boards because the town's administration and staff lead to and encourage back-biting discord that has led to an overall cynicism that permeates business at town hall.
- Yes Fire Mark Hatch he is rude and dishonest he should not work for your Town.
- Whether or not explicit, lack of police oversight, lack of real community policing, history and carry over of officers, and the intimidating stance of police individually and overall closed message sent by letting pd control town services and events and messaging to citizens seriously limits transparency by those in the know and questions asked by citizens. Police surveillance and unequal enforcement inhibits debate and discussion of all including many unaware.
- I think the idea of moderated monthly or quarterly meetings to discuss/debate issues in person similar to town meeting could be a way to build relationships between different segments of town.
- Beware. The public is on to the corruption in Provincetown.

#### Second homeowners:

- I would just like to be treated and have the same benefits as a full time resident. It's just not fair.
- You may or may not consider my survey reply because of my residential status, but you know how I feel.
- Although I own five rental properties and a second home in Ptown, I have no voice in this community. Awful!

#### Full-time residents:

- Best wishes. The yearrounders community is so welcoming and warm when I visit, it's hard to understand where some of the vitriol is coming from.

- Living here, and only here, year round is an experience unlike any other. When you don't have another home or community to escape to, it forces you to be more civil and work out your differences. I enjoy and appreciate the companionship of my friends who live here seasonally or on a part time basis, but I do have to say this very vocal majority tends to stir the pot on social media (often times when they are not even physically here), create strife, and then disappear for days, weeks or months to take a step back and enjoy life elsewhere. Not sure what the solution is, but this place is getting much less desirable of a year round home every year.

*Other:*

- I think it's good that you are working on this as I hear awful stuff about people. Lack of face to face dialogue. Fake news - all is too polarized
- The fact that this survey exists indicates people can be very nasty
- We have our priorities backward and spend money without regard to the future impact.
- Glad you are doing this!
- Not really but I hope the survey has a lot of responses that are helpful
- Thank you.
- I don't know how this survey is going to change anything.
- Thanks for doing the survey. I hope that you get some useful information.
- I love Provincetown and want to see everyone succeed.
- Thank you TM for engaging the voters.
- Just THANK YOU for inviting us to participate in the conversation. Just by asking for our input, you have already improved our Community Conversation.
- The divisiveness goes back to the days of Chief Jaran. It should have calmed by now. Until a handful of individuals in town change their behavior and stop living online it won't change.
- I am impressed that this action is being done. This is a GR8 first step towards town unity, respect and kindness towards ALL Fellows. Period.
- Good luck reestablishing trust and transparency.

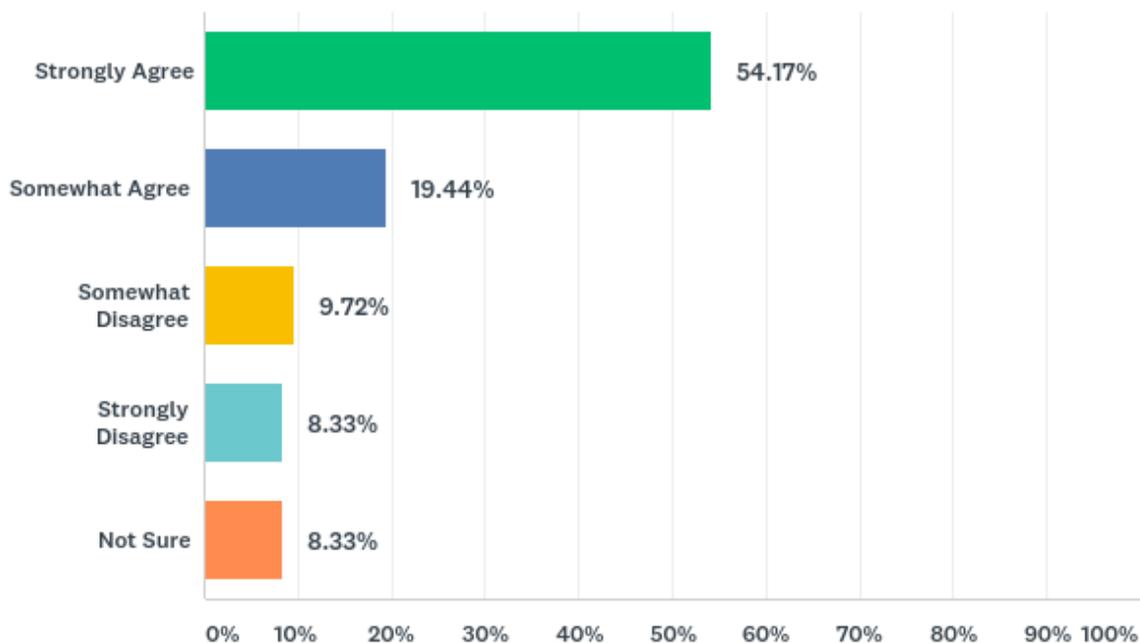
## Appendix D. Themed Responses and Charts from Second Community Survey

As a result of the low turnout for the community dialogues, the dialogue materials were adapted into a second community survey in order to collect further input from the community. However, the survey results do not reflect the kinds of responses garnered after deliberation has taken place. Through the process of the dialogue, participants must weigh their options by looking at the benefits, costs, and tradeoffs for any action they would like to take. Although the survey was written using materials which include benefits, costs and tradeoffs, it does not allow for the interpersonal engagement which helps refine people's perspectives. Thus, the results presented below reflect each participant's personal thoughts and not a collective response.

In order to make better sense of the survey responses, we recommend viewing the Dialogue Issue Guide alongside (see Appendix B.)

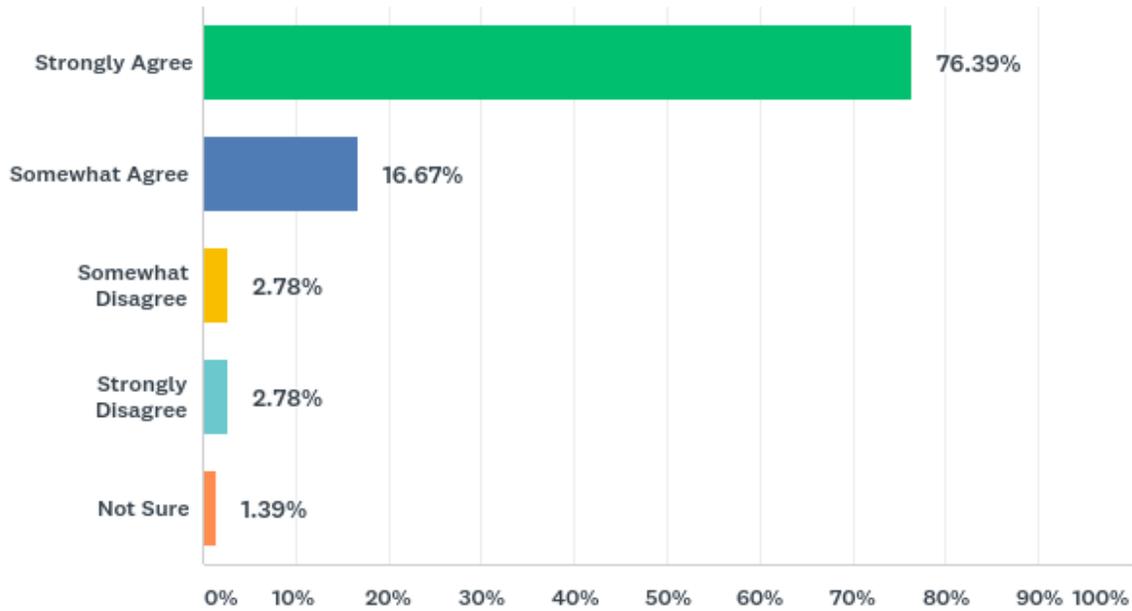
### Q1. Provincetown should create a civil space online to share information and exchange ideas. Agree/Disagree?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 0



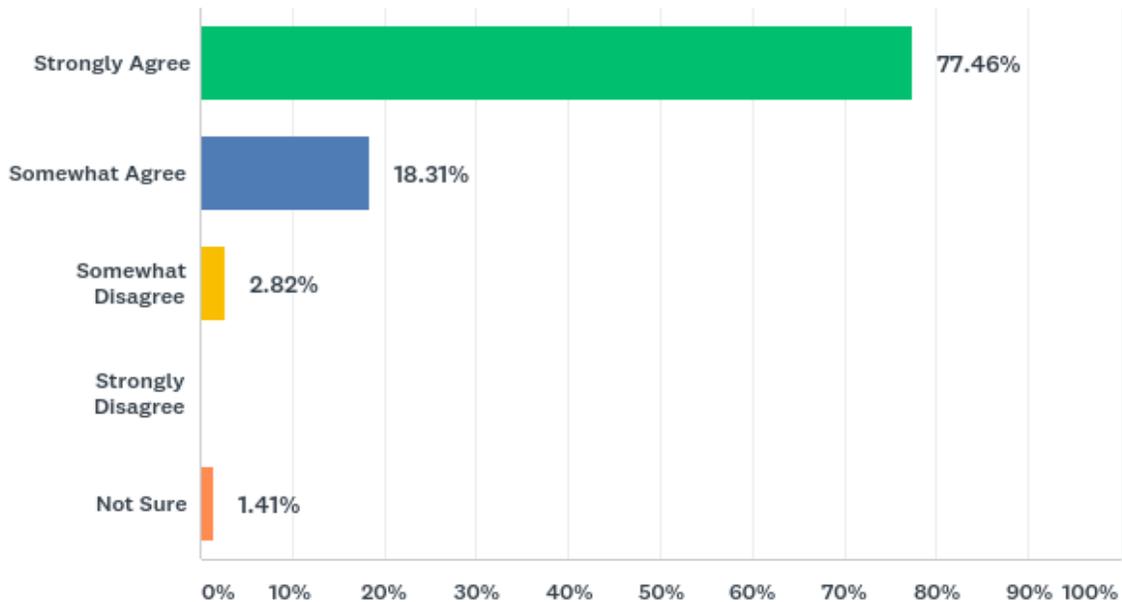
**Q2. Provincetown should work to increase participation in town affairs and decision-making. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 72 Skipped: 0



**Q3. Provincetown community members should come together to build connection and reduce divisiveness. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 71 Skipped: 1



#### **Q4. What are your thoughts on this approach (Create a Civil Space Online to Share Information and Exchange Ideas)? What do you like? What concerns you?**

##### Themed Responses:

*Yes, create an inclusive and engaged Provincetown:*

- Do it. Free speech should not include demeaning others. It's about the ideas, not the people. If someone's behavior is inappropriate and prevents others from exercising their free speech out of fear, the behavior needs to change so it is about the issues.
- Well worth the resources to do this

*Small modifications should be made:*

- Keep some of the wordy folks in check by limiting the number of characters in each posting and limiting the number of posts per day by posters.
- Identify community moderators - this is typical and doesn't waste money - provide some other type of town incentive for people who volunteer to moderate.
- remove individuals who are abusive, disrespectful or use foul language
- Town Talk should be just for town staff. Add in a "question the staff" feature which would allow anyone to submit a question. Allow staff to decide which ones they wish to answer. that's it. anything else...requires babysitting.
- I like the idea of approval and moderation. People tend to hide behind their online comments and disparage others.
- It is a slippery slope between moderating fairness and free speech. However, you can't have a room of cussing, biting, nastiness. There must be rules for civil discourse.
- I think we need a strongly worded, highly visible and transparent social media policy that is positioned prominently on the site. Emphasis should include "rules of engagement" for participation. Perhaps rework the "About" link on the FB page. Even FB has revised its policy and ban users who spew hate speech. FB realizes there is a difference between conservative media and hate speech. By banning those who misunderstand civil discourse will discourage people to hide behind the media.

*Move away from Facebook:*

- People shouldn't have to be a member of Facebook to be able to participate. Many people do not trust them with their data and you'll be missing out on the perspective of younger folks who already do not use Facebook as a social media platform.
- Town talk is dead. Please leave it dead.
- Use something other than Facebook. Maybe opengov?
- Town Talk was always a biased entity and any replacement will be too. Only if you agree with town hall do you get to post.
- This town is full of wonderful people. Take 10 minutes at SKIP to know this. Town should have NO social Media Chat presence. The people hiding in their homes behind keyboards will have no Target if there is no place to Aim.
- Although culturally popular, I think FB is not the best forum for public discourse. PT should have its own website/page dedicated to this discussion and disbursement of information - one that is closely and fairly monitored. Our community's conversations on their friends "private" FB (often casual and personal) and behavior (often bad) transfers too easily to "public" PT/FB. I read, but I would never comment or engage PT/FB since it's too vicious, inaccurate, and assaulting. How

can this ever lead to a healthy discussion? It's always the same, limited number of people commenting on FB. This is not fair representation of views.

- I think Town Talk needs to be shut down, and Town Staff should stick to posting online about meetings and things pertaining to Town Hall.
- Impossible to maintain

*Lack of faith in leadership:*

- The moderator's cronyism.
- Corruption in our police and town government
- Lack of strong, effective leadership from select board.
- Blaming the community for poor communication skills is offensive and inappropriate, and shows poor leadership, having town staff as gatekeepers again makes for poor decisions making process

*Let us move forward:*

- There are basically the SAME "Cliques" of people that join in to support bullying. That needs to be dealt with; especially when it harps back 1-2 years already. Let it Go.
- Ask people to respect past differences and let's all start over.

*Other:*

- Great approach. Total access to all official information
- I thought that this Town Talk was civil as compared to another post PACC which was vicious.
- I feel in person meeting are more productive. People are less rude in person.
- I am not in favor of more moderation.
- It's a good approach to have rules and live by them. However we have seen that there is a small but vocal group in town who consistently break the rules and provide for the environment whereby people with ideas and action simply walk away. Hold those few to the rules and things will work.

**Q5. What other actions may help create a civil space online?**

Themed Responses:

*Community leaders need to step up:*

- Community leaders (government, business, spiritual etc.) leading off with good examples of helpful discourse.

*Increased online moderation:*

- Perhaps Rotating volunteers, with some TRAINING in Neutrality. Also, with special FB names not their own, like Town Moderator 1,2, 3 etc. so they can be strong but not personally known and sneered at. AOL did this for their Forums with Hosts, who handled the commentary, but who were able to summon Guides (also nameless) to bounce someone or have a chat or list them in a report. Enough offenses can get you suspensions.
- I do think "some" monitoring is necessary, but, yes, it could impede Free Speech. However there should be HARD rules about bullying, harassing and making fun of others (most often done by a

few people who are friends; they back each other up). It is a hard line to keep people online, while giving free speech; and defending those getting bullied for doing so.

- Perhaps a training Course in how to handle the Group.
- Set them up as consultations with a deadline and don't let them drag on and on and go off topic.
- Monitor the site for breach of social media policy. Suspend accounts after the first and/or second offense. Ban permanently those with 3 or more offenses. I've been told offenders tend to be a small group of the same people. Eliminating repeat offenders will help.
- You need enforcement and repeat offenders must be barred for the venues. However we have seen town officials be the offenders as well and they must be held to a higher expectation.
- If monitors are chosen (perhaps volunteers on a rotating basis), I think they should not be town officials or act like school teachers either.
- I mentioned once how AOL used to have Guides (who disciplined. by bouncing people) and HOSTS who were just that... but trained, on how to keep the peace. Hosts reported to Guides.
- I believe the Facebook page should be used to deliver info, no deliberation or comments allowed. There are so many other groups to discuss the issues. But ultimately the Select Board should work on getting people to meetings.
- Demonstrate what a good post looks like: "I feel..."
- Simply put, guidelines enforced not by town staff or leadership

#### *Move away from online forums:*

- Wiping them out completely. It will get people IN meetings if they truly wish to be involved. Chat response will NEVER work. Should the town wish to post notices online with NO ability for responses or counter posts. That will actually work.
- I would not opt for online.

#### *No Censorship:*

- Disagree with not [allowing] personal insults or character assassination
- Total first amendment rights with no censorship

#### *Do Nothing*

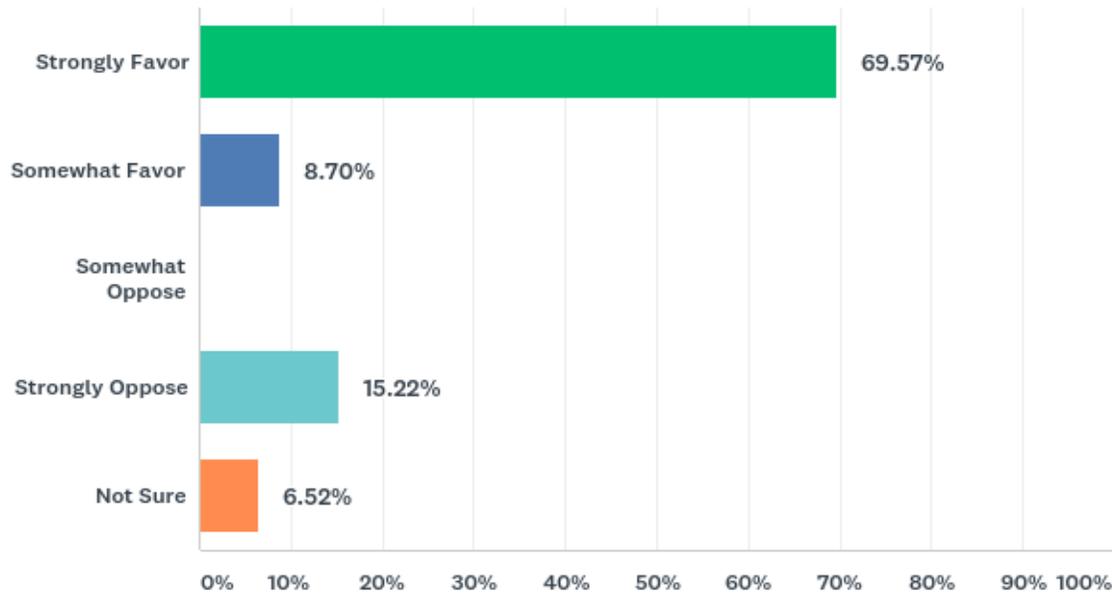
- If you look across the USA, the answer is absolutely nothing. It's not Town's job to do this.
- People need to realize life is not fair.
- Nothing. You can't control the internet.
- People don't follow rules - you'll be spending all your time moderating. That said, something should be done if it's going to exist.

#### *Other:*

- People cannot be anonymous
- Balanced approach, which isn't in place today.
- This survey seems to favor FB/TownTalk but that is the wrong starting point for this discussion. If this survey only offers discourse via FB/TT then the responses won't truly lead anywhere except to a potentially better FB page - and that's a poor solution to this problem.

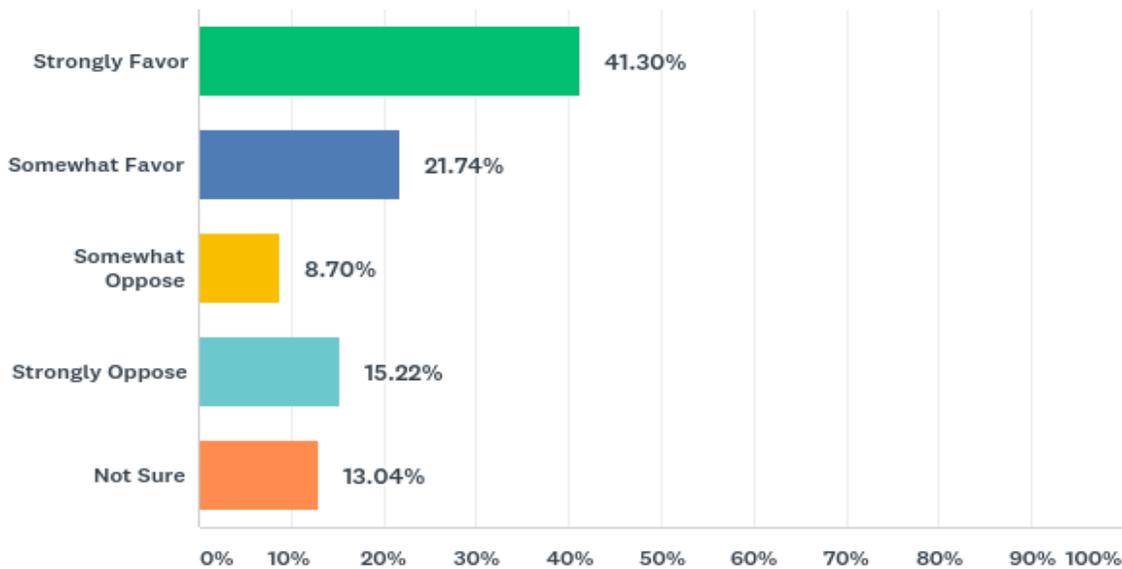
**Q6. Develop ground rules for participation on Town Talk, outlining expectations of how participants should engage with one another. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 26 Skipped: 46



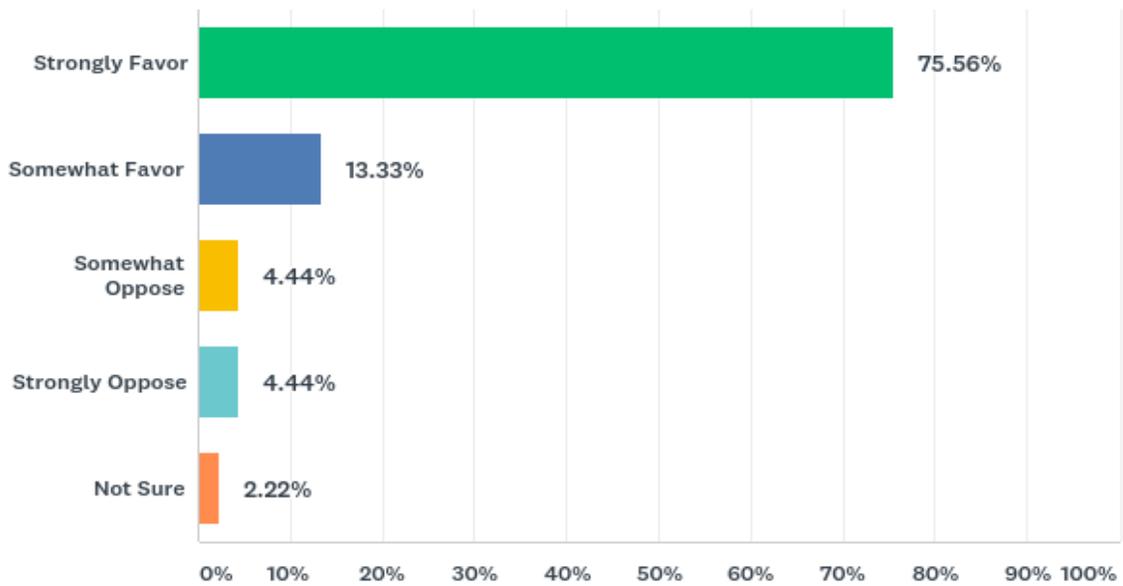
**Q7. Support town staff enforcement of town social media policies. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 46 Skipped: 26



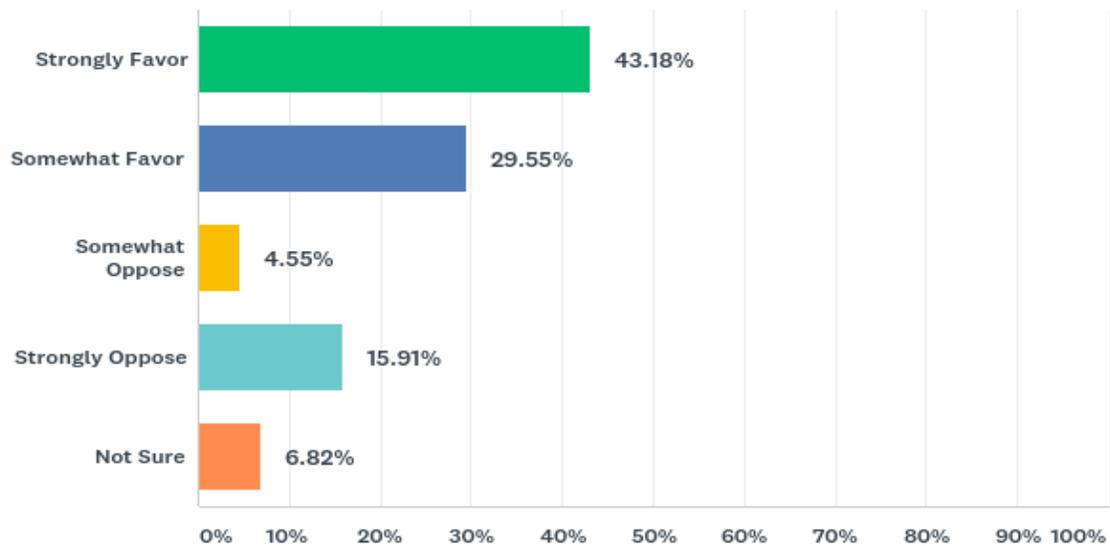
**Q8. Increase transparency of Town Talk, e.g Town staff and official posts must be public, moderators must be transparent about violations of social media policies. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 45 Skipped: 27



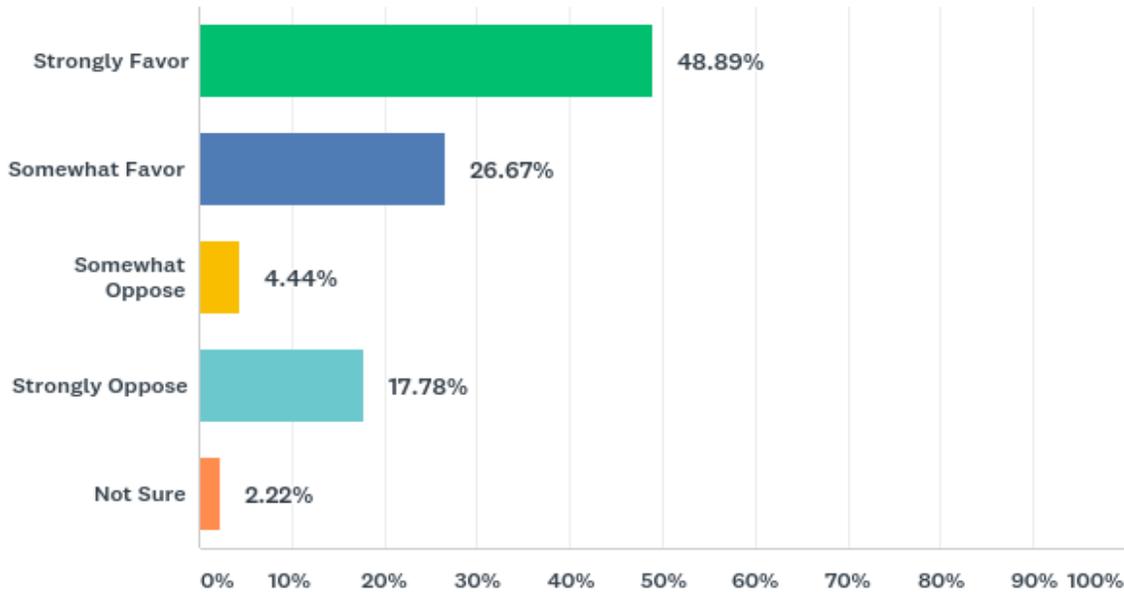
**Q9. Optimize moderator role on Town Talk - e.g. hire a staff moderator, or identify community moderators. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 44 Skipped: 28



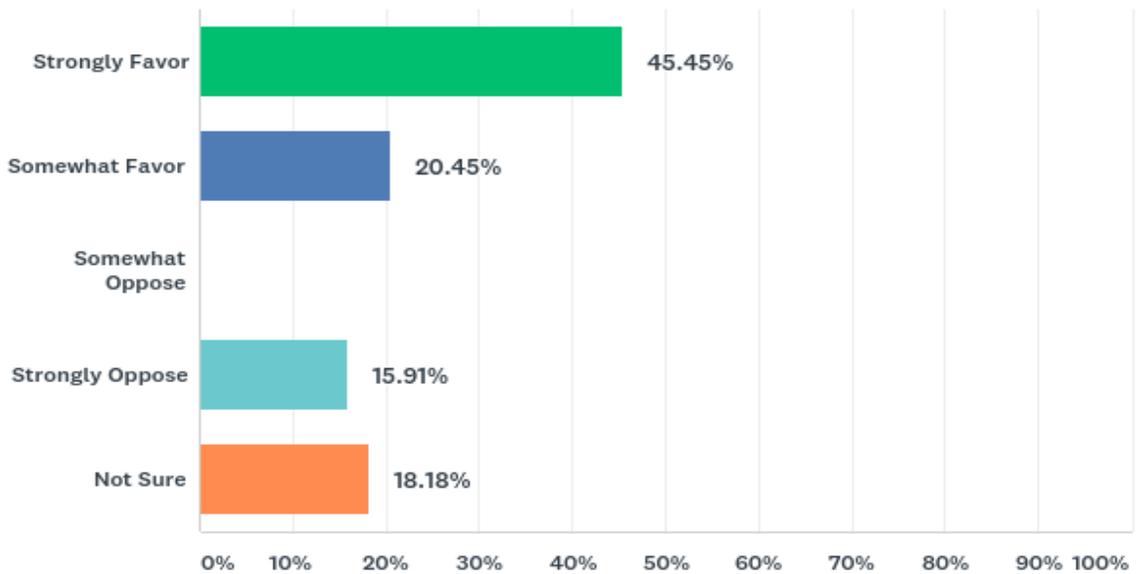
**Q10. Have participants flag inappropriate posts/comments on Town Talk and other social media sites. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 45 Skipped: 27



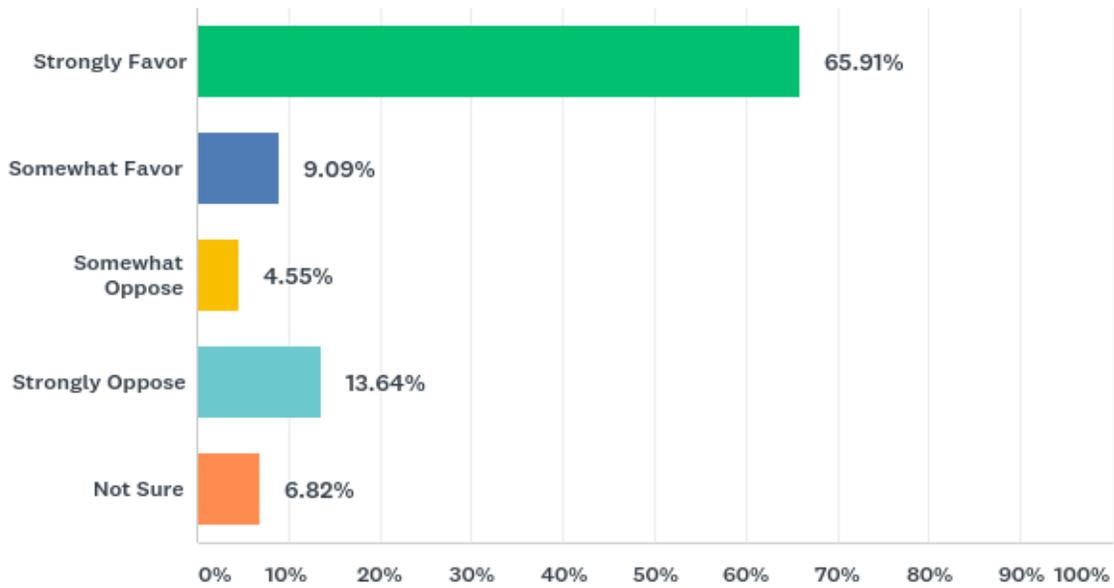
**Q11. If voicing concerns online, people must provide ideas for solutions or suggest actions to finding solutions. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 44 Skipped: 28



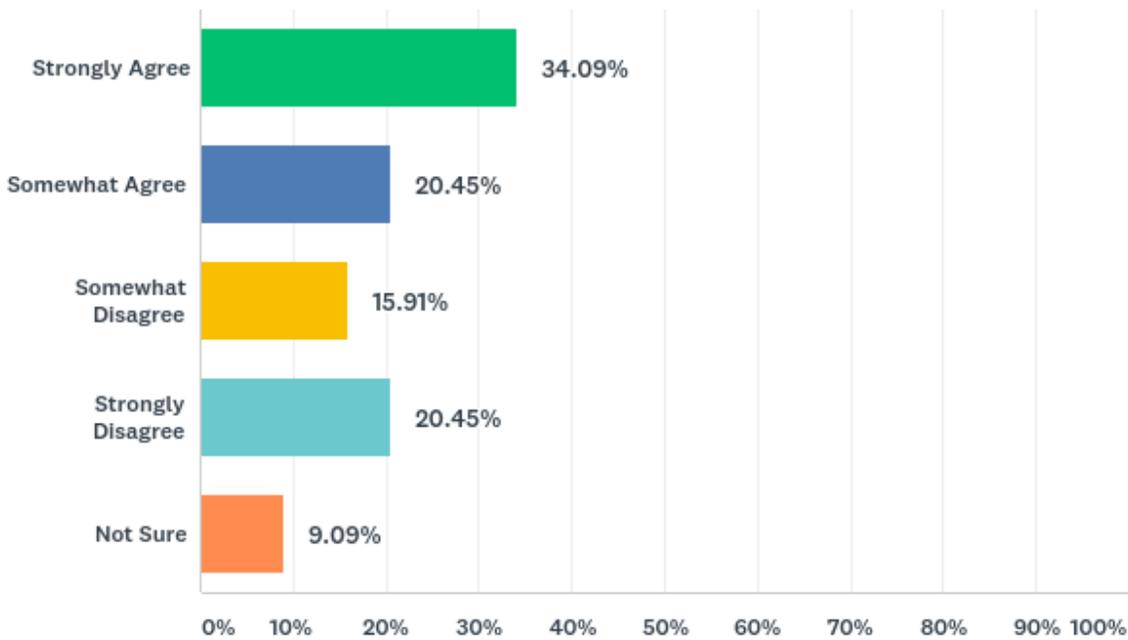
**Q12. Agree that Town Talk is a space for respectful disagreement and conversation over vitriol. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 44 Skipped: 28



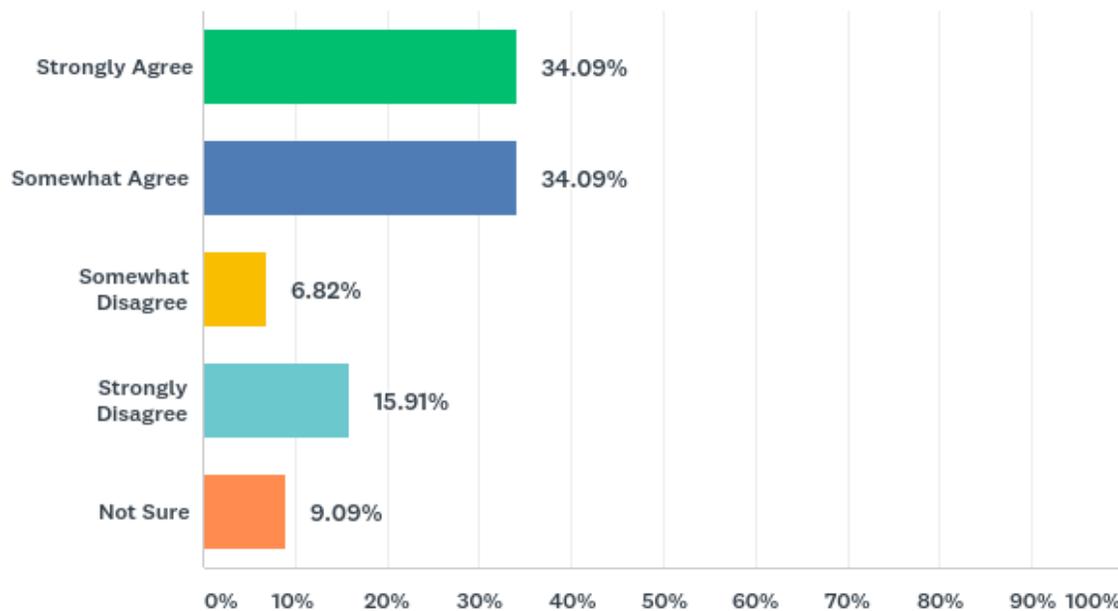
**Q13. We should enforce civility on Town Talk EVEN IF it restrains free speech. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 44 Skipped: 28



**Q14. We should increase moderation on Town Talk EVEN IF it requires additional staff or volunteer hours. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 44 Skipped: 28



**Q15. What are your thoughts on this approach (Increase Participation in Town Affairs and Decision-Making)? What do you like? What concerns you?**

Themed Responses:

*Allow for increased participation from second homeowners:*

- I am a year round resident but have many neighbors and friends who are 2nd homeowners here and have a lot to offer. I fully support increasing their participation.
- Second homeowners must be allowed to engage in discussion and decision making.
- P-T property owners should be allowed to vote at town meeting.
- Part time residents are valuable members of the community and should not be marginalized.
- I love the idea of being more inclusive and involving second homeowners & increasing information on when meetings are happening
- Strongly agree. Need to include second home owners and give them a voice. We are taxed at a higher rate and yet, have no voice
- Perhaps we can kill this horrid segregation of Us/Them. Look at the language used above. Second homeowners/ year rounders...that alone begins a separation. Try, Town Residents.
- Poor behavior and general discouragement of town engagement exists in both the P-T Community and in the Town Admin (starting at the top, TM). Many Town Admin ignore emails, don't return calls, and don't listen to the Community. That said, there are exceptions -for example, Sherry Prada is accessible and fair-minded. She has a weekly email blast that connects to all people - "Townies" and "Second Homeowners" (a poor characterization that is perpetuated by many). Town Boards are generally better at providing access to Town policies, allowing the community a voice - but that's only because they are made up of people from the Community. Second Homeowners (2HO) can't be all characterized as the same, but most LOVE this town, yet at every step, in every conversation, they are diminished, criticized, and ignored. 2HO make a

concerned and dedicated effort to come to PT from many locations - mostly from the Boston area, Providence, and NYC. Many 2HO have worked hard to earn the money to afford to do this, yet they are demonized by many people who live in PT year-round. Yes, we need a more engaged community and the current environment does not allow that.

- Second homeowners are treated like evil, money loving second class citizens. Allowing us involvement would make us more invested in the community without the fear of the locals attacking us.

*Do not allow for increased participation from second homeowners:*

- Absolutely no to second homeowner participation. We already have a select board that has no clue what it's like for the average year round resident to survive here. They are all securely housed, some with multiple homes. They are for the most part financially stable. We do not need people who vacation here dictating anymore than they already do, how we live here when they are gone. And while I find myself to be a vocal participant in community affairs, I work Monday nights and can not attend meetings. I work multiple jobs so availability is limited to attend forums. I am not alone in this situation. WE are not refusing to go to meetings because of inertia or disinterest. It's because of a need to make a living.
- Second home owners should not have a say in the daily life of year rounders. They enjoy all the benefits without putting in the time.
- I think second homeowners Being involved will only be more divisive. If they want to be more involved, then they should make Provincetown their primary residence and actually join the community.

*Use of internet/social media:*

- If Town Talk became both a bulletin board as well as a place for people to ask questions, I think we'd have made progress.
- I agree with most of this approach. However, voicing opinions online is equally as important as attending and or voicing concerns at meetings. We should embrace the technology as another medium for gathering information and feedback-- not discount an opinion because it is expressed online. This is not an acceptable solution to address civility. Social media allows us to cast our net wide and reach everyone (including those who feel disenfranchised within our community.)
- Meetings are held during the week which leaves second homeowners and those who vacation for the winter unable To participate since the meetings are F2F, why not use available Technology such as Skype and Virtual rooms To encourage better participation.
- Meeting summaries need to be online the day after a meeting - at minimum all motions and votes. Simplifying creating minutes with an online platform would really expedite this.
- I agree that official information can be difficult to find on the Town's website. Alternative ways to vote sound great. I was home-bound with an injury this year during the Town Meeting and was unable to attend which was very frustrating for me but it's hard to imagine a way to vote remotely during such a meeting. Is that something that could be looked at?

*Lack of leadership:*

- Unfortunately our elected officials are not leaders they just have time to serve. We need people to serve that are experienced in leading.
- Town Staff lack the communication and skill set to carry out such endeavors, a third party may be needed, The leadership and staff have displayed extremely inappropriate behaviors, from leaking

inappropriate actions, behaviors, have been practicing selective enforcement and often engage in witch-hunts and blaming the community

*Other:*

- I am tired of hearing from people who complain but do nothing to improve the situation besides identify it.
- Will people actually engage if these efforts are made? Or are people still rather unwilling to change

#### **Q16. What other actions may help increase participation in town affairs and decision-making?**

##### Themed Responses:

##### *Modifications to town meeting procedures:*

- Stream every meeting, build out fiber [optics] and connect entire town
- Have informational meetings and discussions during non-business hours on important issues, like climate change, etc, during nights and weekends.
- P-T property owners should be allowed to vote at town meeting.
- Using alternative voting could be helpful.
- Weekend meetings and virtual meetings
- Notice of Meetings: This might be good, but the problem is - and I have attended many of these meetings - they commonly revise the agenda so the notices are outdated, the meetings are poorly managed, they run too long - so notices might not be the primary issue. Also, there are too many meetings resulting in low attendance (who has the time to attend 10 meetings just to discuss bike lanes on the new Shank Painter Road?). Need greater efficiency.
- Meeting Minutes: In the real world, after every meeting a summary must be distributed in a timely manner, so everyone can see the discussion and results. Town Board meeting minutes are often submitted online weeks or even months later. A concise meeting summary should be issued within a day or two of a meeting - and this should probably be done by Town Staff since we already ask too much from the volunteers on boards.
- Voting: Can there be a better way to engage more people? Can second homeowners be allowed to vote on some items? Many locals aren't around for some votes - can they be engaged? If this Town has 2,700 legal residents yet only has a voting membership of 250-300 people there's clearly a problem. Although, I don't think locals want to extend voting options. A perfect example - let highly qualified second homeowners sit on regulatory boards. BOS and Locals denied this option with the revised Charter - so now we have Boards without quorums resulting in delayed decisions and loss of Town income and jobs.

##### *Increased representation/participation for second homeowners:*

- Second homeowners should have representation as a group at meetings and votes that often impact them.
- The more locals and second homeowners work together maybe the less vitriol.
- Including second home owners in the process

*Improvements towards volunteer/service work:*

- Give volunteers a stipend. I mean at least for regulatory and electeds. It takes a lot of time, and we are older.
- Recruit new volunteers, welcome part time residents
- Create an order for people who participate. Recognition goes along way.

*Improve outreach:*

- If the Banner or Cape Cod Times has a town beat reporter who attended or watched town meetings and reported on them online or in the paper, those who aren't on Facebook could know more of what is going on.
- You need to make the benefits known to folks. Make announcements/have booths/have representation accessible at town events that aren't town-government related to reach different audiences.
- Not putting everything online. It does nothing but keep people tethered to FB and shouting at the keyboard. Town Hall has a wonderful light system for displaying holiday theme. Use it for Town Meeting info. Shock. And Awe!
- On-line or Live TV Meetings: PTV has been good at trying to provide access - but many meetings you can't hear the discussions, PTV isn't airing the meetings (certainly lately) and they run too long. Can this be improved?
- Engage second homeowners: Virtually all P-T nonprofits have already done this for decades. For example, PAAM is obviously a noteworthy entity that tremendously helps tourism and builds the artist community, but PAAM also offers so much to the local year round community - via classes, lectures, youth programs, etc. PAAM could only do this through positive engagement with the second homeowners. Similarly with the FAWC and PIFF/PFS. Why is the Town so far behind on this and why haven't they engaged the second homeowners thinking of them as just a tax base?
- Find better ways to get the public through the doors
- Broadcast more meetings and forums live on PPTV

*Elected Officials:*

- If the boards could at least make some noise that they are listening to the community and our concerns it might make people feel more like they are being heard and taken seriously and less like they are beating a dead horse where they voice the things that they struggle with (HOUSING) and NOTHING MOVES FORWARD! Year after year until we all give up.
- If I were on the Select Board I would invite all of the naysayers in for a discussion. Recently it was suggested that a contributor to Town Talk should apply to a town board and he did not think he would be appointed since he is frequently critical of staff and elected officials.
- Town Projects: Most town projects are very poor managed and flawed - and this discourages participation because people feel it's too much work and frankly, useless. For example, the police station (PS). People vote to support a new PS (starting 10 years ago?). Too much money is spent over and over again on PS planning studies. A PS site is bought via TMtg, yet that site is then not used, instead an other TMtg vote to build on another site, one that was previously designated as green site for wildlife. Then the \$8.7M project was not properly monitored by the Town, the budget increases to \$12M, and the current project is rejected at TMtg. This is just one example - Harbor Hill is another, and then the Community Center. This is why there's limited faith in Town

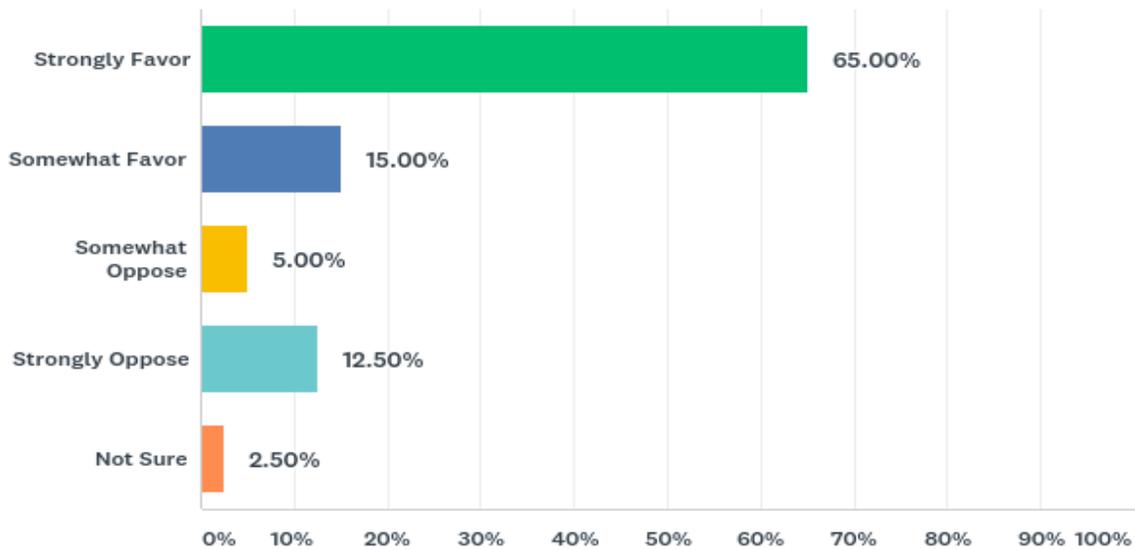
Admin - even though there are many examples of good work like the repaving and new sewer system.

*Other:*

- get rid of the people who are negative or abusive
- Many of the potential actions listed here can work assuming they are carefully thought through and strategically implemented.
- Only let a person comment once rather than repeatedly.

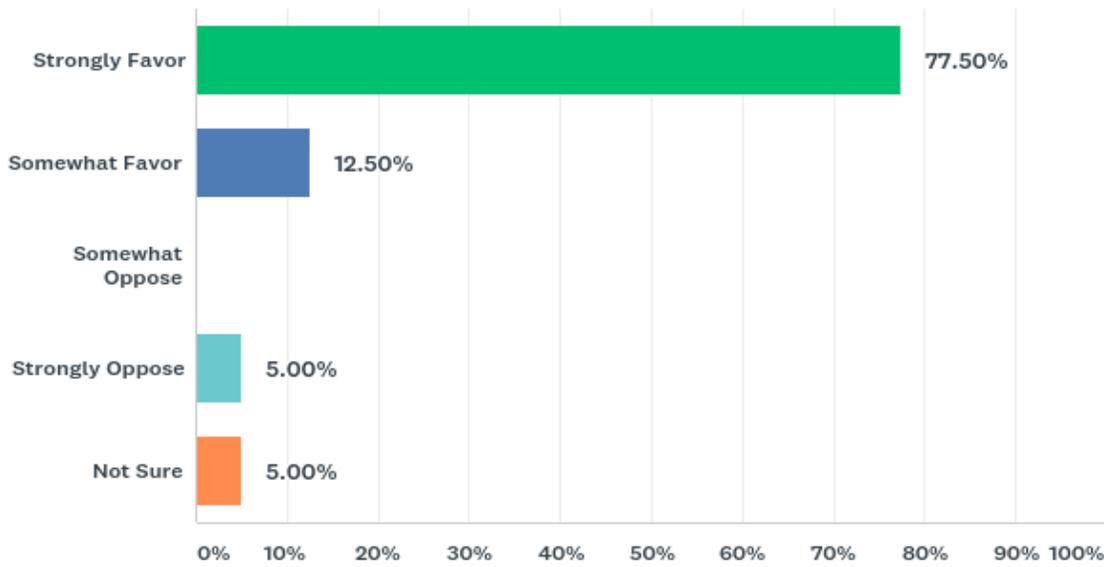
**Q17. Find ways for community-minded second homeowners to be involved. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 32



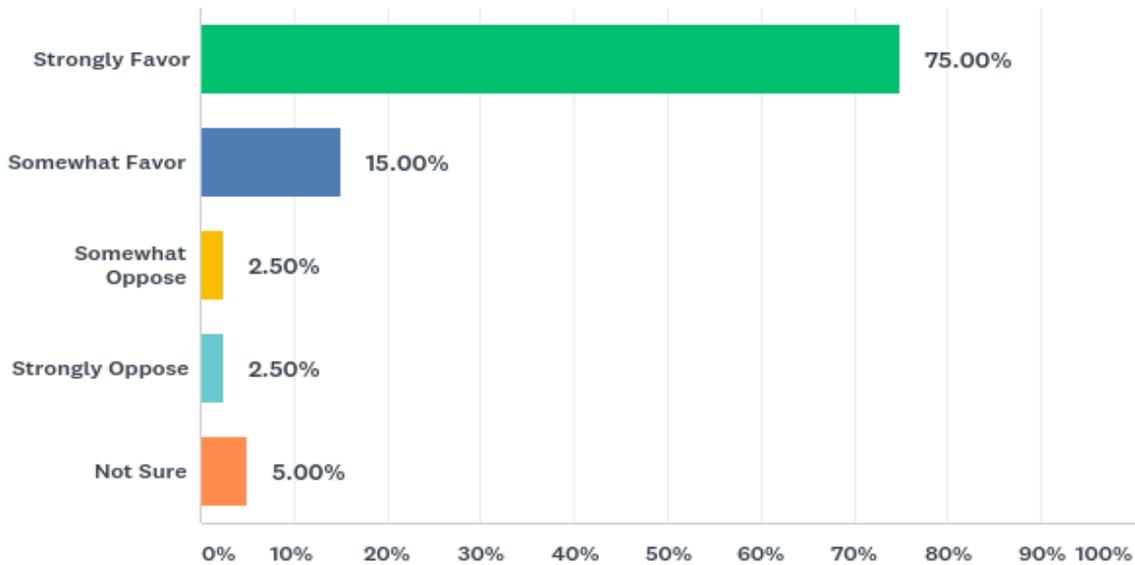
**Q18. Improve notices of meetings - including online, mail, and bulletin boards. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 32



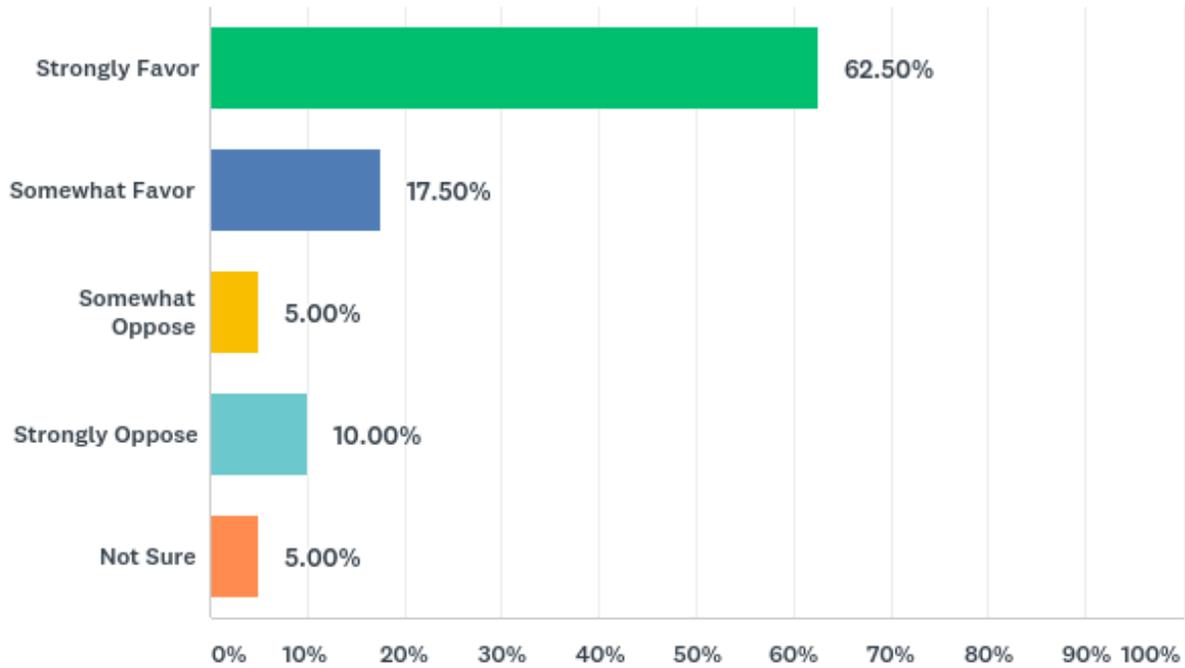
**Q19. Improve access to information and recordings - make them easier to find and digest. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 32



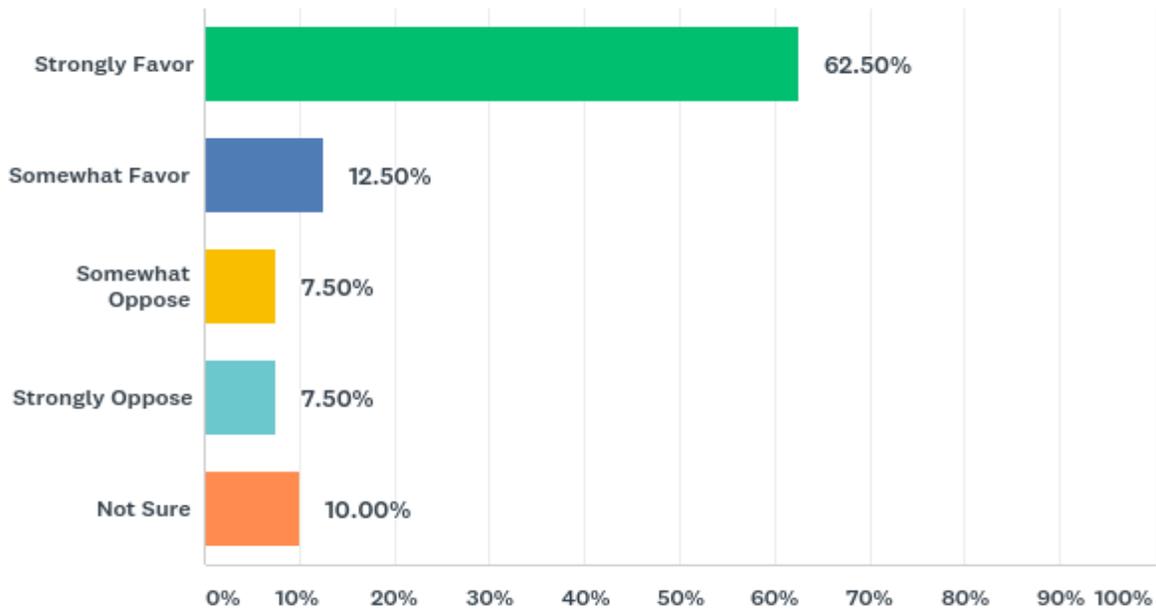
**Q20. Explore alternative voting methods to increase participation and reduce fear of retaliation or ridicule. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 32



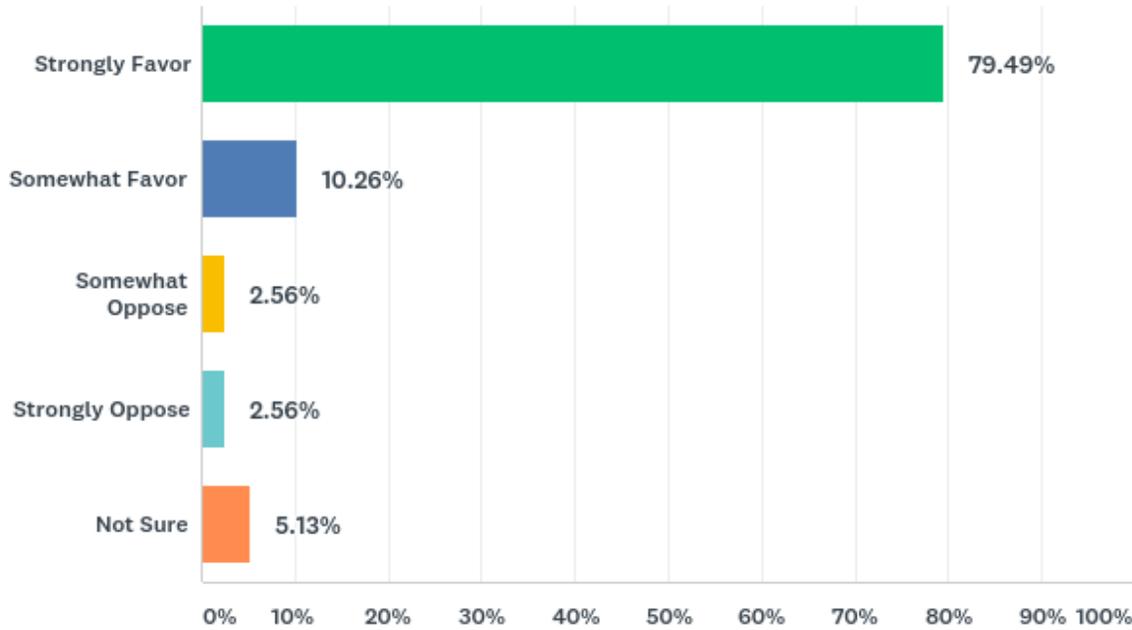
**Q21. Agree that voicing opinions online is not a replacement for attending & voicing concerns at meetings. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 32



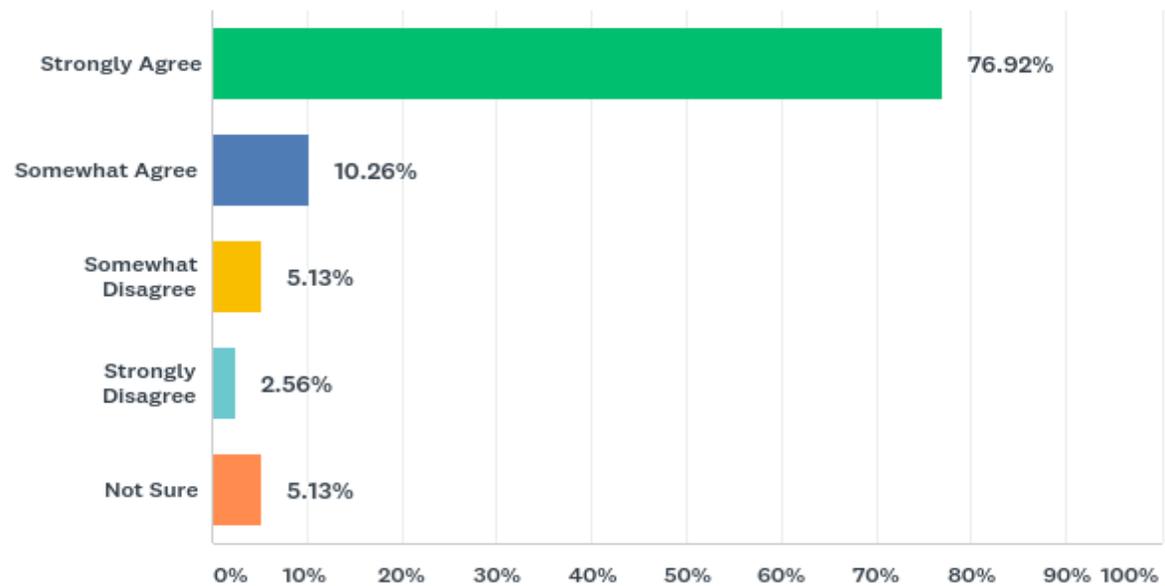
**Q22. Enhance skills in leadership, public engagement, collaborative decision-making, and communications for town officials, committee members, etc. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 39 Skipped: 33



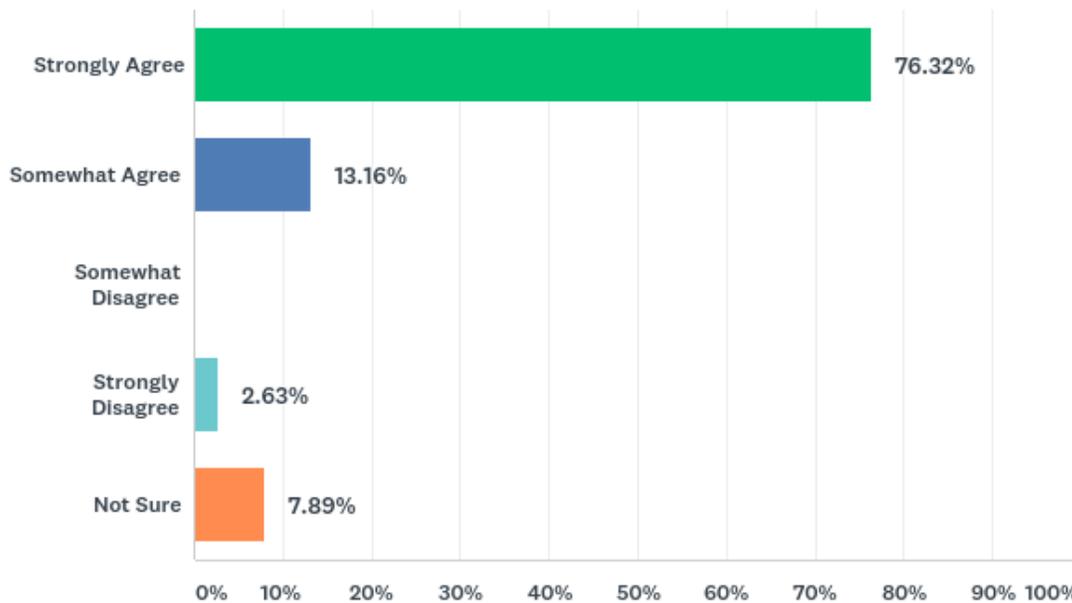
**Q23. We should reduce barriers to information and voting, EVEN IF it means increasing personal responsibility. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 39 Skipped: 33



**Q24. We should increase participation in decision-making, EVEN IF it means greater distribution of power. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 38 Skipped: 34



**Q25: What are your thoughts on this approach (Foster Community Connection to Reduce Divisiveness)? What do you like? What Concerns you?**

Themed Responses:

*Unified Provincetown:*

- I would be OK with Town Talk just being notices from town government but it would sadden me as it could be a great place to have discussion of a lot of creative ideas. I would prefer trying a moderator/s at first and go to just notices as a last resort. I'm not convinced joint activities will have an impact. Encouraging folks to go to each other's events has a greater likelihood of sharing cultures.
- If people would participate in boards and committees they would get the opportunity to meet their neighbors and to feel more engaged.
- What if Town Talk was part of the reason for the divisiveness? Did that ever occur to anyone?
- Community Meetings: Will more be helpful? Probably not, or perhaps, first try to make the existing meetings better, more efficient, more productive, more accessible.
- Focus on events celebrating Provincetown as a whole, not just specific groups.

*Town Talk as bulletin board:*

- Making Town Talk a bulletin board, executed by third party.
- Yes -- make town talk a bulletin board only
- I like Town Talk as an official bulletin. I'm concerned that there's too much apathy and attendance and participation won't be sufficient. It seems like there are a lot of second home owners that just

want to come here to relax, socialize with the chosen group of people, and have fun and aren't particularly inclined to commit to civic action or activities.

*Eliminate Town Talk:*

- Ditch Town Talk. Even town admin folks can't always keep their cool on there
- I support eliminating FB/TT but this only works if it's replaced - in advance (and therefore tested) - of another online/web site for distribution of Provincetown information.

*Continue using Town Talk:*

- Town talk should develop a "no jerks" protocol.
- I liked the previous Town Talk where views can be discussed without vitriol
- I would assume those offering the idea to make Town Talk a bulletin board from Town Staff are in the "over 55" age group. Social media is the wave of the future. Let's not go back to the 20th century. Find a way to keep Town Talk interactive. Restricting it because of a few bad actors hurts us all, keeps us in the dark ages, and takes away a tool that can be seen by ALL constituents, including those who live here part-time
- Do not eliminate Town Talk!
- I think people will go elsewhere to voice their opinions if Town Talk is eliminated

*Other:*

- I think you need a combination of all these ideas.
- Secret ballot voting at town meetings
- Divisiveness is a good thing, it shows that people are thinking for themselves
- more positive input from second home owners must be allowed
- Have the residents of the neighborhood do their own things to get to know each other. This is not just a Ptown issue it happens everywhere.
- Events to engage Staff: Many staff at Town Hall are now over-worked so will more events really help? Also, most of the staff I've worked with do the bare minimum, aren't friendly, don't think outside the box, say "no" too fast, and do not communicate professionally, so not sure events to engage them will work? "

**Q26. What other actions may help foster community connection to reduce divisiveness?**

Themed Responses:

*Encourage positive discourse:*

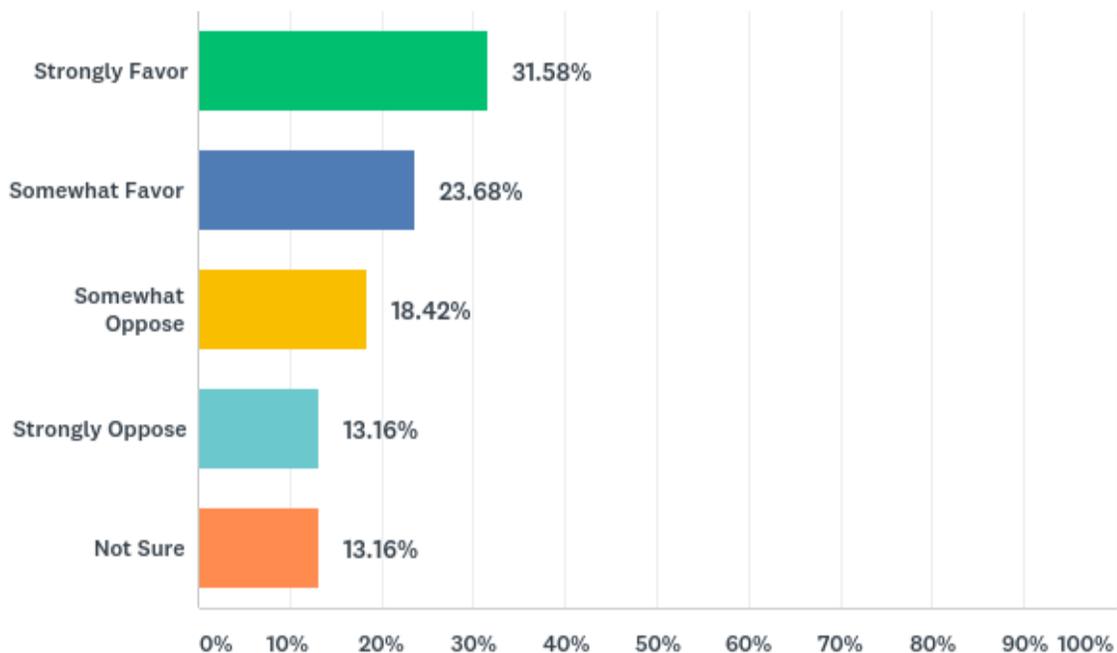
- A course in community civility
- People need to be encouraged to talk to one another more.
- More events is a good thing. Let the level of participation dictate whether the additional events were needed.
- I don't believe that the majority of us are divisive. I'd like to believe the numbers are small but unfortunately loud and start to gather more in a "pack" mentality. It doesn't help that the Board of Select is divisive. Good leadership sets a tone.
- Get rid of Provincetown Community Space also. Truth is I nearly changed my mind to move here due to what I saw on both of the FB forums. Exiting both quagmires made my "vision" less sullied and living here was possible

Other:

- I am a property-owner who spends 50% or more of my time in Provincetown year-round (summer to winter) for both work and play - I don't see much engagement from the Town Admin (I do see lots of engagement from the non-profits). I have offered to help the Town, to work (free) to advise or assist in anyway possible, yet they only engage when I reach out first and pursue the issue. The minute I stop communication with Town Admin, I'm off their list. This is true with many Boards too.
- Having inputs from a more diverse community members 2nd homeowners, seasonal workers Better self policing between members may help
- Stop being dismissive of concerns.
- Stop the tax rebate turn it into a town fund for Improvement of housing.
- The composition of PTown will always be communities made up of "Us's and Them's". Our differences define us. We should embrace those differences by identifying ways to build community, consensus, and collaboration versus restricting communication forums. That takes us in the opposite direction. The Town should reach out to Diversity and Inclusion professionals who know how to build these kinds of strategies well. We do the opposite-- hold events for special groups, exclude others (i.e. non-residents), blame others, take volunteer contributions for granted, etc. Shame on us! :-)

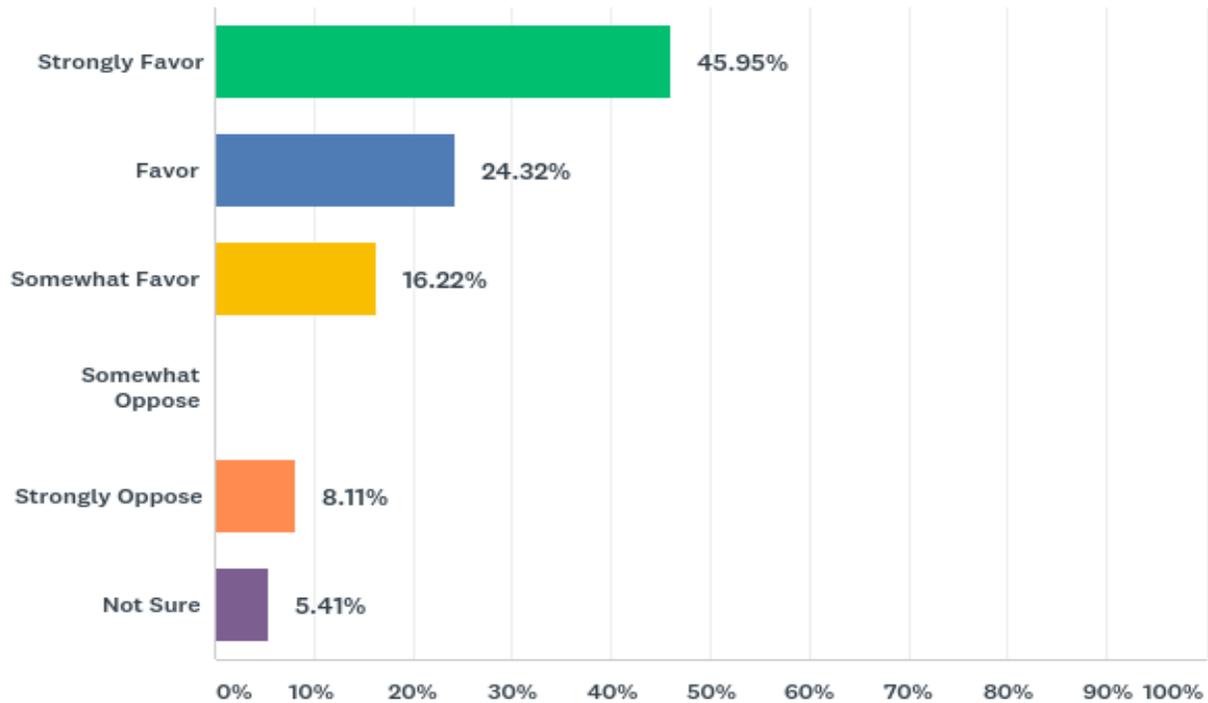
**Q27. Consider eliminating Town Talk or making it a bulletin board from Town Staff without comments. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 38 Skipped: 34



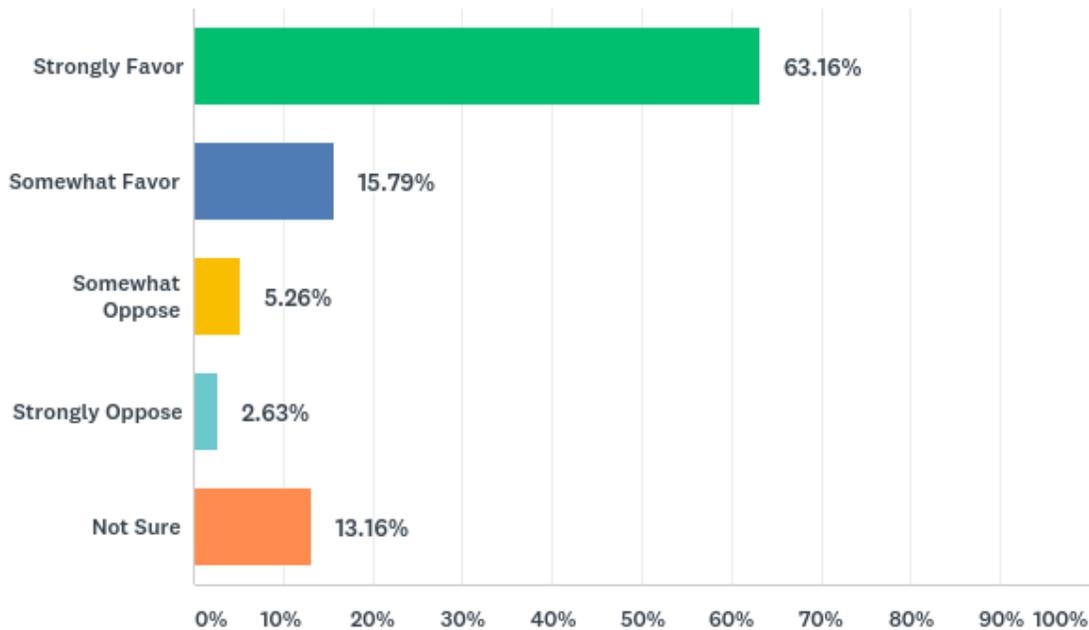
**Q28. Create community-building opportunities - e.g community conversations, volunteering, gatherings. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 37 Skipped: 35



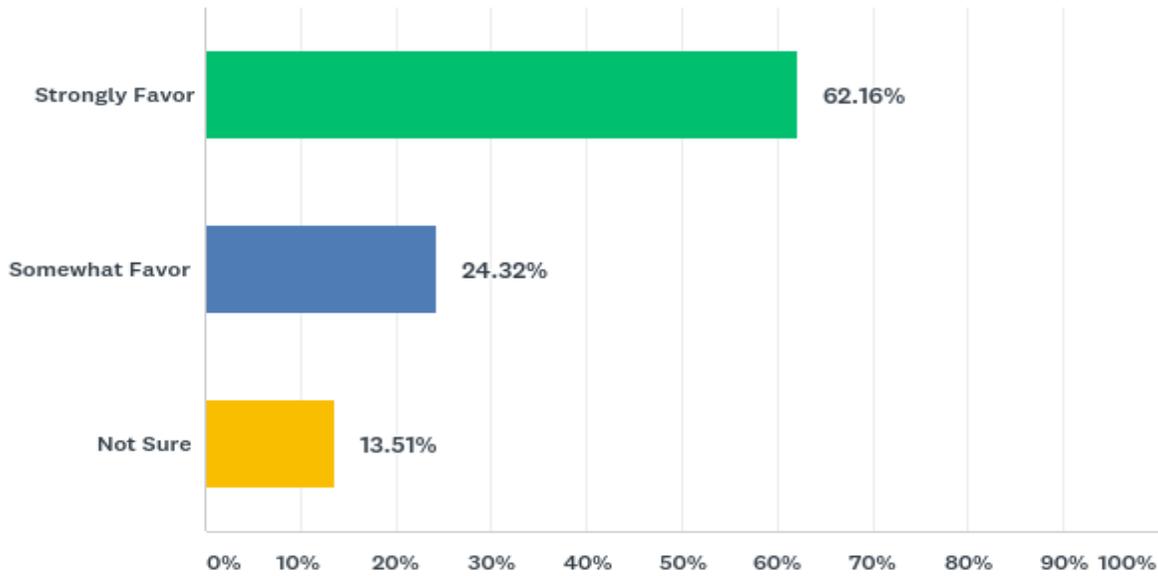
**Q29. Focus on events that celebrate Town as a whole vs. events for specific groups. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 38 Skipped: 34



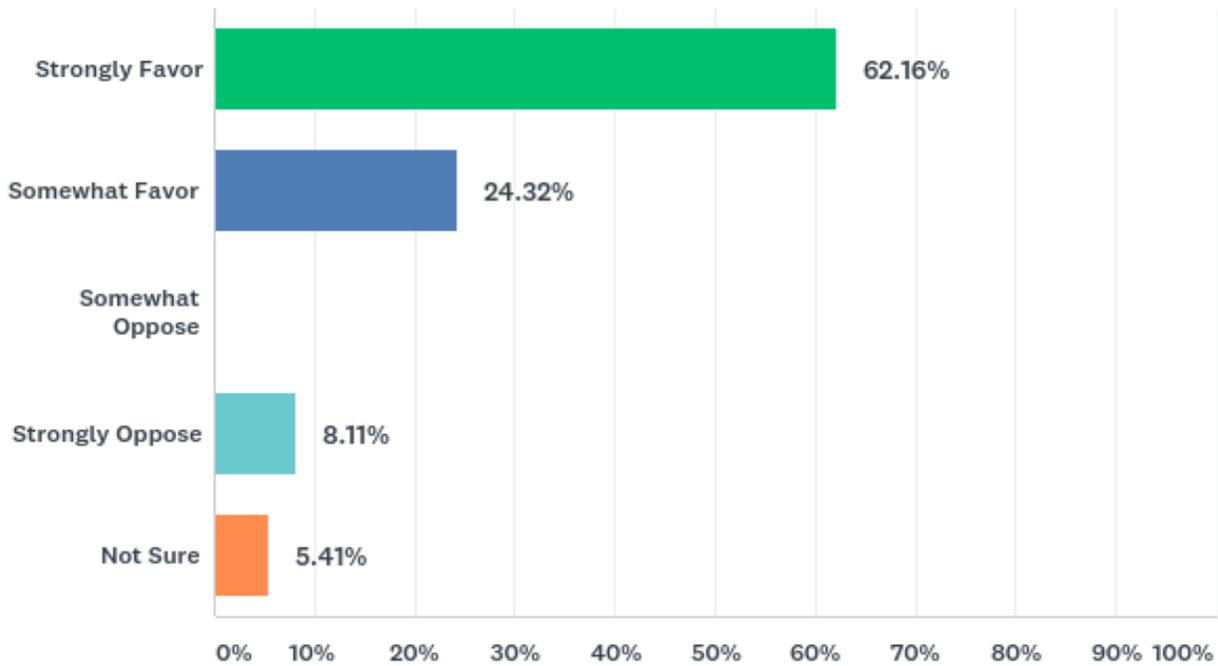
**Q30. Create informal opportunities to get to know staff, officials, and committee members, and partner and collaborate on public initiatives. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 37 Skipped: 35



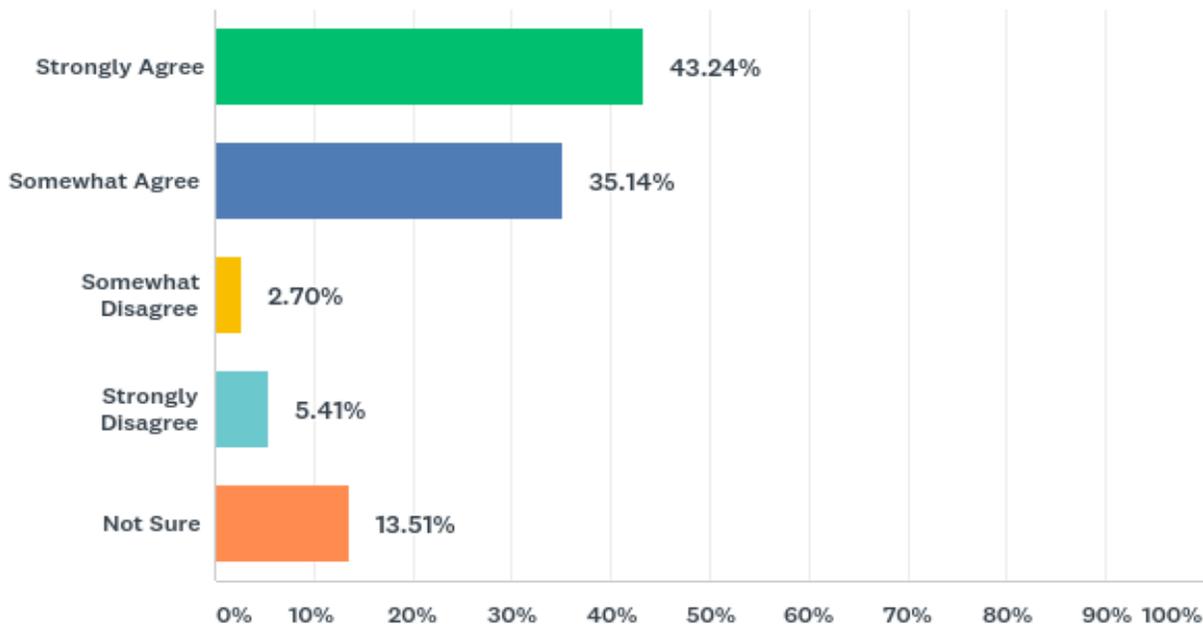
**Q31. Identify a vision and commit to goals to further Provincetown’s potential as an inclusive community. Favor/Oppose?**

Answered: 37 Skipped: 35



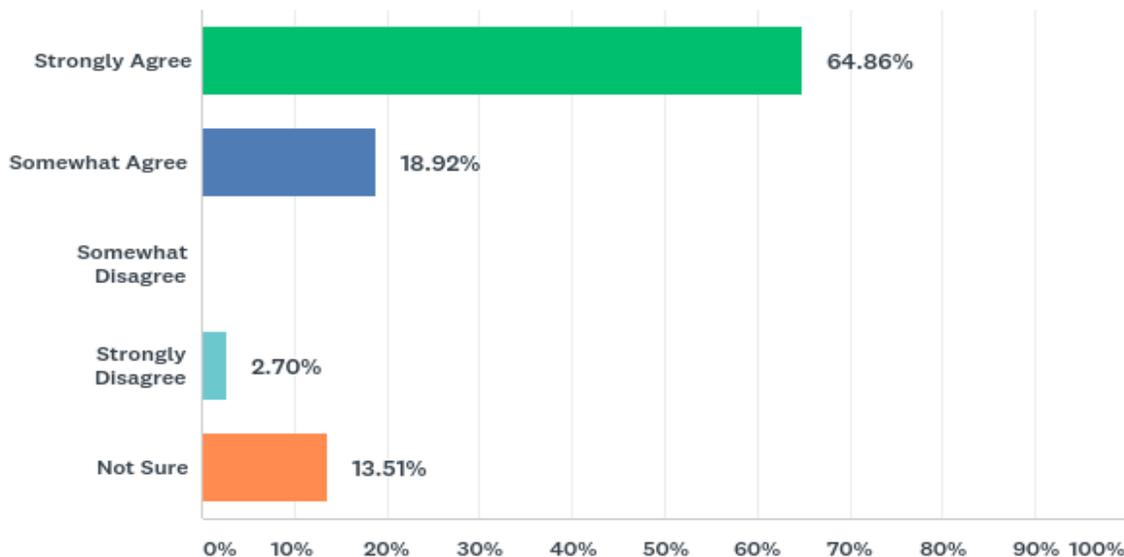
**Q32. We should offer more community building opportunities, EVEN IF it means prioritizing this over other personal commitments or interests. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 37 Skipped: 35



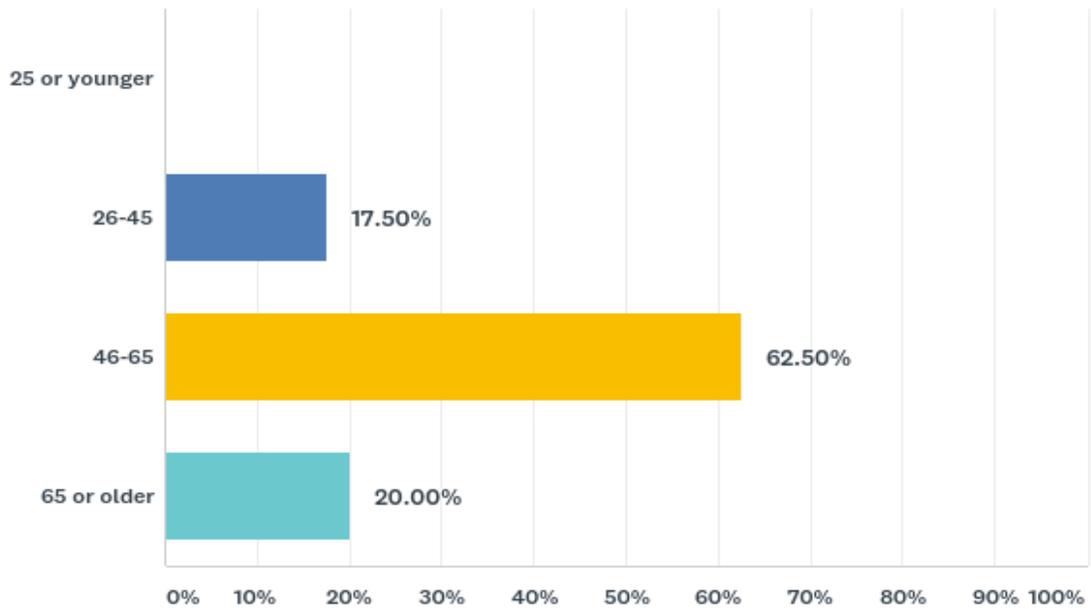
**Q33. We should reach out to people from different groups EVEN IF it feels uncomfortable or we don't get along. Agree/Disagree?**

Answered: 37 Skipped: 35



**Q34. How old are you?**

Answered: 40 Skipped: 32



**Q35. Check all that apply:**

Answered: 39 Skipped: 33

